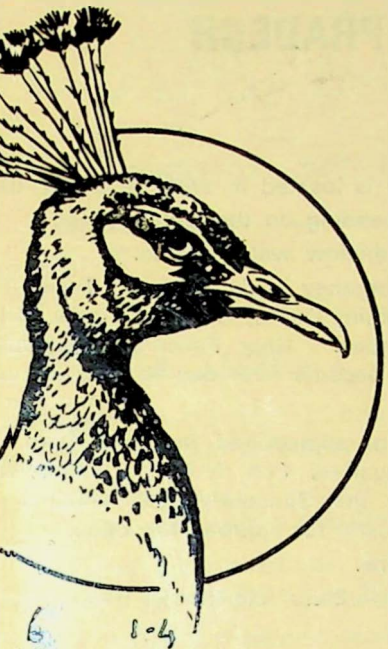

MAYURA

NEWSLETTER OF THE BIRD-WATCHERS' SOCIETY OF A.P.

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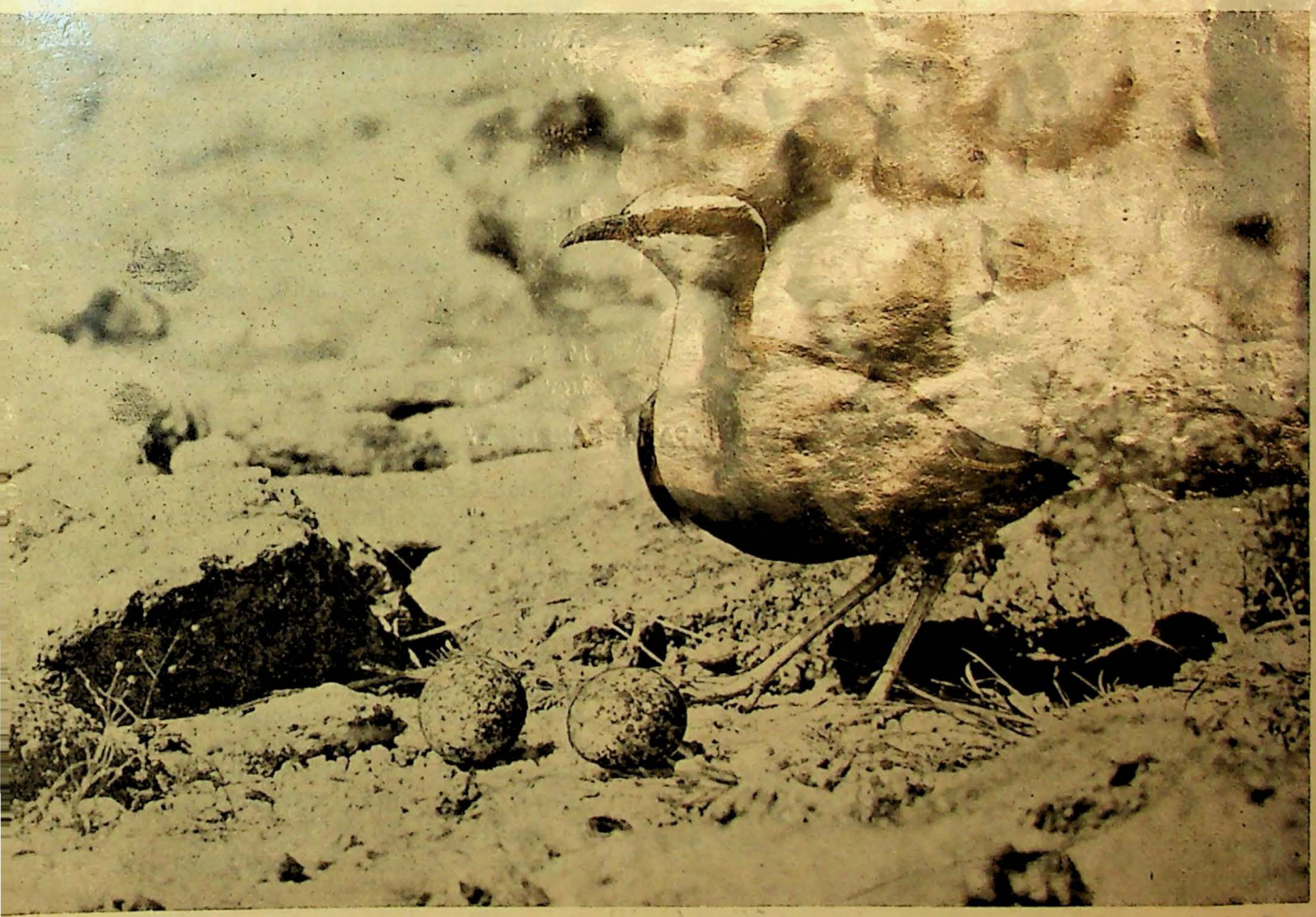
V. No. 2

Jan.-Dec 1985
April ~~June~~ 1984



BIRD SANCTUARIES OF ANDHRA PRADESH

KOLLERU SANCTUARY

Location :	The Bird Sanctuary is located in West Godavari District.
Area :	673 Sq. Kms. (Depending on the water spread)
Habitat :	It is a marsh with shallow water spread.
Birds Found :	Large number of Garganey Teals, Common Teals, Pochards, Spotbills, Brahminy Ducks, Openbill Storks Herons, occasionally Flamingoes. Grey Pelicans which used to visit this area have become rarer due to various causes.
Season :	October to March.
Accessibility :	The Sanctuary can be approached by road from Eluru, the District Headquarters (on N. H. 7) which is just 10 Kms. away. In the Sanctuary area small dinghies or dugouts can be used for approaching birds.
Airport :	Vijayawada — 70 Kms.
Accomodation :	P. W. D. Rest House in Eluru, the District Headquarters.

PULICAT SANCTUARY

Location :	60 Kms. north of Madras City on N. H. 5
Area :	500 Sq. Kms.
Habitat :	A vast coastal shallow brackish lake along the east coast of the Bay of Bengal. The backwaters of the sea attracts a large number of migratory water birds.
Birds Found :	Large congregation of Flamingoes, Grey, Pelicans, Ducks, Teals, Storks, Terns, Herons, Gulls and a number of waders.
Accessibility :	The Bird Sanctuary can be approached by road from Nellore on the G. T. road (NH. 5). The nearest railway station is Sulurpet. Madras City is about 60 Kms. from the Sanctuary to the south by road & rail.
Season :	October to March
Airport :	Madras — 60 Kms., Tirupati — 90 Kms.
Accomodation :	Travellers Bungalow at Sulurpet.

NELAPATTU SANCTUARY

Location :	The Bird Sanctuary is located on the East Coast, about 20 Kms. north of Pulicat Bird Sanctuary in Nellore District.
Habitat :	A small fresh water irrigation tank in the village of Nelapattu, with Barringtonia trees in the water spread on which the water birds nest.
Birds Found :	Grey Pelicans are found nesting on the Barringtonia trees in the tank bed. Other nesting birds include Cormorants, White Ibis, Night Heron, Openbill Storks etc. The villagers offer full protection to these birds.
Accessibility :	The Sanctuary is approachable from the Madras-Vijayawada Highway (NH. 5). Also by rail from Doravarichatram railway station on the Nellore—Madras line. (1 Km.)
Season :	October to March
Airport :	Madras — 100 Kms., Tirupati — 120 Kms.

For further details contact : Divisional Forest Officer (WLM) at the respective District Headquarters OR The Chief Wildlife Warden Govt. of Andhra Pradesh Saifabad, HYDERABAD-500 004

(Indexed: Birds' Places)

MAYURA

Jan 1987

NEWSLETTER OF THE BIRDWATCHERS' SOCIETY OF ANDHRA PRADESH

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Editorial Board:

Aasheesh Pittie

P. Balakoteshwar Rao

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Articles for MAYURA may be sent to the Hon: Secretary, BSAP, 6-3-249/3, Road No.1, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad - 500 034 or to Aasheesh Pittie, 14-7-370 Begum Bazar, Hyderabad - 500 012.

SURVEY OF THE BIRDS OF ANDHRA PRADESH - 16.

By: Pushp Kumar, I.F.S.

Continued from Vol. 5 No. 4, Page 72

B U S T A R D S: Otididae

These long-legged and large birds (length 122 cms. and height about 1.2m) in the case of the Great Indian Bustard are brown, white and black in in colour. The males are usually larger (except in two species) and showy, putting on displays at 'leks' or display grounds (usually raised ground) to attract females which are drab and smaller in size (except two species). They are birds of the dry grasslands with sparse scrub. These grasslands are being increasingly encroached on and converted to agriculture and other uses endangering the existence of these birds. Bustards also enter fields of dry crops like maize and cotton etc., and occasionally feed on them. Farmers know the Bustards to be their friends since they feed on locusts and grasshoppers and other insects which otherwise would destroy their crops. However, they are classed by the local shikaris as 'game birds' and hunted by modern day 'sportsmen' in fast moving jeeps. They are also hunted by trappers with nets and snares.

22 species of Bustards are reported world-wide. Of these, 6 are reported from the sub-continent. In Andhra Pradesh TWO species occur.

GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD Choriotis nigriceps (Vigors)

Telugu: Batta Meka Urdu: Tuqdar

Resident. Formerly reported from most parts of the State, it is now restricted to the drier western parts. Persistent reports were received from Ranga Reddy, Mahbubnagar, Nalgonda, Medak, Nizamabad, Adilabad, Kurnool, Cuddapah and Anantapur Districts. Specific reports were received from reputed shikaris and nature lovers like the late Raja of Jatprole who reported seeing them near Kolahpur in Mahbubnagar District. Similar reports were received from grasslands or 'Kanchas' near Hyderabad (Shamshabad, Madinial) and from Nandikotkur in Kurnool District. Occurence of this bird was also reported to the International Symposium on Bustards held in Jaipur in November, 1980 through a status paper. However, the Great Indian Bustard continued to be listed as occuring only in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujerat, Maharashtra and Karnataka States by the Bustard Group of Experts. A vigorous 'hunt' was thereafter launched in 1981 to specifically locate the Great Indian Bustard in Andhra Pradesh. A live specimen was received from Kurnool in February 1982. Enquiries made by Mr. Vara Prasad, Range Officer, Srisailam and Mr. Rameshwar, Deputy Conservator of Forest, Srisailam in June 1982 revealed the existence of a small population near Rollapadu village in Nandikotkur Taluq of Kurnool District. During a survey in July 1982, three birds could be seen in the dry grassland and fields of Rollapadu village and surrounding areas. This could be accomplished with the help of the local villagers and some shikaris who had been traditionally trapping these birds. One bird (male) seen picking insects near a dry rivulet allowed approach to about 300 feet and thereafter flew off at a low height over a distance of about 2 kms. away and settled in a fallow field. When approached it 'went to ground' in the dense bushes of Cassia and Phoenix. Only the off-white neck and upturned beak could be seen. The bird was alert and warily peering out at the observers. It was approached to about 100 feet, before it flushed and flew off again, this time about 4 kms. away. Later 2 more birds (males) were observed near

another village about 5 kms. away again in the bushes of Cassia and Phoenix. The area though non-forest land was protected thereafter by appointing watchers from the local shikaris and tribals. In July 1983, six birds were seen in the same area. In December 1983, alongwith Dr.A.R. Rahmani of the Bombay Natural History Society, 7 birds were sighted in the dry grassland. Hostiyeri also located. In July 1984 alongwith a press team, 38 bustards were seen in the same area. At least 3 were displaying, their white necks gleaming in the sun. Is this why they are called Batta Meka (Batta= White cloth in telugu)! Reports were received of bustards further south around Banganapalli. Survey revealed evidence of their existence in this area also. They were subsequently observed by Mr. Jagan Mohan Rao, Field Director, Project Tiger. In December 1984 there were 7 birds in Rollapadu.

A scheme for the conservation of these rare birds is being implemented since 1983 with the full co-operation of the District Collector and the local people. For this besides offering strict protection, an area of nearly 1000 hectares, which is the nesting ground, has been acquired and the entire area protected.

Reports of the sighting of the Great Indian Bustard have been received from Muginayanpalli in Anantapur District, Bathikonda area in Kurnool District. In Muginayanpalli area, 3 birds were seen and photographed by Mr. K.P. Muniswamy, Conservator of Forests, Anantapur.

The local movements (?) of these birds are being studied by a team from the Bombay Natural History Society and valuable data is expected to result. The 'core area' in Rollapadu which is a rocky grassland and which was being cultivated frequently by the local villagers is being protected by digging a cattle proof trench all round.

LESSER FLORICAN Sypheotides indica (J.F. Miller)

Telugu: Nyala Nemali Urdu: Leekh

These, smallest of our bustards show marked sexual dimorphism. From the two specimens examined, it was clear that the male though smaller is a handsome bluish-black bird and buff-brown above. It has a double black plume on the head made of black horny feather-like material with three spatulate 'tines' on each, jutting out towards the front, not trailing back as shown in some illustrations. The female is an all brown long-legged bird with the peculiar triangular (heart shaped?) marks on the upper plumage which are more prominent than in the male. The dark head also has a conspicuous parting (appropriately?) in the middle. The female as unlike in the Great Indian Bustard is larger than the male.

A male specimen, a live bird, was brought to the Nehru Zoological Park about 15 years back. It was reported to have been caught by some 'pardis' around present Zaheerabad. It was reported to have been accidentally trapped when they were trying to snare hares and partridges. At that time it was not listed as an endangered bird and was reported much more commonly. The male (recognised by it's plumage) was in it's breeding plumage and had the characteristic plumes. It was brought in August or September and was kept in the aviaries near the Bear moats. A diet of meal worms (tubifix worms), millets and greens were given. It was alive for 2 to 3 months. Efforts at the time were also made (through the same source) to obtain females in order to attempt breeding them but without success. The male unfortunately did not survive. Thereafter no other attempts were made to get another bird.

The skin of another specimen, a dead one was brought on 8th November'84 by Mr. Siraj A. Taher.

It was reportedly shot by a hunter friend of his near his (friends) farm on or about 1st November 1984. Apparently Mr. Taher was not present on the occasion. The farm was stated to be located at Indresham village near Patancheru, about 40 kms. north-west of Hyderabad. The measurements of the specimen were as follows:

Length	----	480 mm.
Wing	----	233 mm.
Bill	----	47 mm.
Tarsus	----	107 mm.
Tail	----	142 mm.

The skin had the characteristic triangular dark markings on the brownish buff upper plumage, the dark head had central parting in the middle, there was a prominent white supercilium and the lower plumage was brownish white. The measurements and description of the bird tallied with that of f female Lesser Florican.

Subsequent frantic searches by Mr. Taher in collaboration with some of the forest departmental offiçers failed to elicit any further evidence. On this information a team was sent out by the Bombay Natural History Society to make a wider search, covering a number of districts in Andhra Pradesh. This team also failed to locate the bird or any hard evidence of it.

Reports have been received from reputable shikaris of the presence of the bird in the grassland environs of Hyderabad City.

The checklist of Vishakapatnam District by K.S.R. Krishna lists it as being found in Rajam.

The village shikaris of Kurnool District report capture of this bird in the recent past. Jalda a shikari and now a knowledgeable watcher and an ex trapper identifies the bird as occuring in the grasslands of Rollapadu. He is even familiar with the peculiar behaviour of the male jumping up and down during the rainy season in this area. This behaviour was also familiar to the peasants and shikaris in Nizamabad District.

The telugu word 'Nyala Nemli' or the field or grassland peacock (obviously this refers to the male with its bluish-black plumes and it's crest plumes so similar to the peacock, which gives it this name) eloquently describes the bird as a resident one. In eclipse plumage the male would not have any resemblance to a peacock at all! The inference would therefore be that males in breeding plumage are found in Andhra Pradesh. It is also evidenced by the live specimen brought to Nehru Zoological Park. However, literature does not specifically list the Lesser Florican as occuring in Adhra Pradesh except for one report from West Godavari District quite some time back. In fact the theory that the Floricans gather during the breeding season in Gujerat, Rajsthan and Madhya Pradesh belt and then disperse during the non-breeding season to climes unknown, requires to be re-examined thoroughly. In the meantime the enigmatic 'Nyala Nemli' continues to be elusive.

Editor's Note:

A detailed account of the Lesser Florican found in Indresham Village was given in MAYURA Vol. 5 (4) page 77.

BIRDWATCHING AT HORSLEY KONDA, CHITTOOR DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH

By: N. Shiva Kumar, A/37 - A.B. Nagar, Karwan, Hyderabad - 500 267.

Even before daybreak I was all set with my camera and positioned on the roof top of the guest house for shooting the rising sun behind the hills on the horizon at the mini hill resort of Horsleykonda. After which for three crisp morning hours, along with a local guide enjoyed walking to all the vantage points and in the process I jotted a small list of birds without the aid of binoculars. Birds were many and many more were the birdcalls, but the list I feel is meagre for I made sure that the birds in the bush tallied with the ones in the bird book - Collin's Handguide to the birds of the Indian Sub-continent.

I was on an official trip to Tirumala, Tirupati, Kalahasti, Vellore, Horsleykonda and Lepakshi collecting information (22nd to 28th March '85). And that is how I landed up at the only authentic hill station of Andhra Pradesh, which is perched at 4255 feet above sea level with a pleasant day time atmosphere and very cool nocturnal hours. Vegetation on the hill slopes and the surrounding valleys is lush with a hazy blue-green tint-like mist in the yonder. It is an excellent place for birdwatchers and botanists.

The first bird that I came across was a Brahminy Kite Haliastur indus with an impressive white head, sitting snugly on the bough of a tall eucalyptus. For a minute I was taken aback by the beauty in the bird for I had never before seen this Kite at rest. Later saw two more in flight but on enquiry I learnt that there was no lake nearby excepting a pond on the spur of the hillside - probably nesting around somewhere, which I could not locate. Being fish-eaters, Brahminy Kites need water bodies that hold their kind of food. They, however, feed on large insects and scavenge as well. A day before I observed it fishing at the huge water-filled moats of the Vellore fort. It was certainly deft at spotting and shooting down to the water with a quick turn of the wings and grab it's catch (fish) with the long reaching talons and feed in flight.)

Bulbuls were in plenty, particularly their calls were the only 'disturbing' sound on the top of the hill. The Redvented Bulbus Pycnonotus cafer were ofcourse there but what I had sighted were different.---They were either the Redwhiskered Bulbuls Pycnonotus jocosus or the Whitecheeked Bulbuls Pycnonotus leucogenys, with forward facing pigtails for a crest. Seeing them for the first time I was thrilled - not just one or two but quite a handful, noisily flying from bush to bush of the lantana. There was a Golden Oriole Oriolus oriolus, a few Crimsonbreasted Barbets Megalaima haemocephala monotonously calling in their loud coppersmith metal beat, a few Jungle Crows Corvus macrorhynchos, Black Drongo's Dicrurus adsimilis as usual boldly occupying prominent sentinel posts. Also spotted a few Paradise Flycatchers Terpsiphone paradisii mostly the female ones and just one male with a not-so-long tail.

There were numerous other tiny birds flirting from tree to tree, as the Camel's Foot Bauhinia purpurea, Jacaranda Jacaranda mimisifolia, Gulmohar Delonix regia and Mango were in flower and I did not dare identify the smaller ones other than the Tailor Bird Orthotomus sutorius and the Ashy Wren-Warbler Prinia socialis for I had no 'extension tubes' for my eyes to get a close-up view. A Redstart Phoenicurus ochrurus and a Blue Rock Thrush Monticola solitarius were sighted near some rocky areas with huge boulders doing the balancing act. A group of Rufousbellied Babblers Dumetia hyperythra also allowed me to have a close look with no fear whatsoever.

Other common birds noted were the Indian Roller Coracias benghalensis, Hoopoe Upupa epops a swift and a vulture which I could not identify, call of the Jungle Fowl, and Peafowl Pavo cristatus and a Coucal Centropus sinensis. Surprisingly I saw no doves at all nor any woodpeckers bee-eaters or parakeets. However the guide claimed that there were,lots of parakeets at times and he also was certain about the Indian Pitta Pitta brachyura which I refused to believe.

On enquiry with the locals, they conceded to have seen a number of colorful birds down in the jungles of the valleys and a few usually were hunted for the pot. Even otherwise the birdlife at Horsleykonda was quite rich and the surrounding jungles were fairly dense and seemed to provide cover for varied wildlife. The detailed map (1:50,000) of the Survey of India indicates thick jungles and most of it is marked under 'reserved forests' areas with numerous streams flowing down the high cliffs.

I suggest that the BSAP members hold a birdwatching camp and explore the area around Horsleykonda. This might provide a bonanza of birds and other flora and fauna with which the BSAP members would be able to coax the forest officials to declare the area as a Wildlife Sanctuary.

Travel particulars:- Horsleykonda is located in Chittoor District near Madanapalle town in the southern tip of Andhra Pradesh. Every day there is a direct train and bus from Hyderabad to Madanapalle and from there it is 28 Kms. to Horsleykonda, including a 9 km. steep uphill road. There are three mini bus trips every day to the top of the hill or unmetered taxis can be hired from Madanapalle. It is 557 Kms. from Hyderabad, from Madras it is 250 Kms. and 165 Kms. from Bangalore.

SOME INTERESTING BIRD SIGHTINGS FROM HYDERABAD AND SURROUNDS

By:- Aasheesh Pittie, 4-7-370 Begum Bazar, Hyderabad - 500 012.

1) DUNLIN Calidris alpinus

There is one doubtful record dated 23rd January 1983 from the ICRISAT campus in Patancheru, Medak District in my files - stating "suspected in a group of waders in paddies". However, two recent records on Jidimitla Lake (Fox Sagar) off the Nagpur highway, 15 kms. from Hyderabad are worth noting. On 20th December, 1985 some friends and I saw a single specimen of this bird feeding briskly in the squelchy shallows of the lake's margin alongwith various sandpipers. A week later on 27th, when the BSAP members made a field trip to Jidimitla, we again saw the Dunlin — this time 2 birds! Every one had a good look at them through the spotting scope. One of the birds had clearly visible traces of black on it's belly (summer plumage) . The other did not have this. They were larger than the Common Sandpipers Tringa hypoleucos and their heavy, down-curved bill and black upper tail-coverts with whiter sides (in flight) were quite diagnostic. This winter migrant, according to the Handbook is found sparsely inland as occasional winter visitor or passage migrant throughout northern and peninsular India from Kashmir to Kerala ....it is a straggler south of central coastal Maharashtra and the Deccan'.

2) BARRED JUNGLE OWLET Glaucidium radiatum

This bird was heard almost every day from the 7th to the 28th of January 1985, when I was staying in Banjara Hills (Hyderabad). The presence of this owlet in an urban garden, when the habitat it occurs in is generally mixed moist-deciduous forest and secondary jungle, is noteworthy.

Perhaps it came to this patch of Banjara Hills because it is still fairly dense with trees, in an area razed to the ground for housing. Huge peepal, neem and banyan still stand here. The bird's funny monotonous call would be heard often - gradually increasing to throughout the night - and now and then waning off again to be heard from dusk to early night - and now and then in the night till abour 0900 hours. Call:- "Cur-cur-cur-cur-ur" 4- $4\frac{1}{2}$ to $5\frac{1}{2}$ times. Rather ventriloquial..This may be the nuptial call according to the Handbook. (The breeding season is from March to May.) On at least 3-4 mornings the usual call of this bird was heard once or twice - "kao-kao-kao-kao-kuk-kaokuk...."-very loud and close at hand. There was also a very loud and bubbly sort of call - described in the Handbook as "woiwoioioioioioioioi...keek". I saw this bird only on 27th and 28th, alongwith M.S. Kulkarni, when we saw the horizontal stripes on its body and the rufous wing patch when it was at rest.

3) ALPINE SWIFT Apus melba

Two birds were seen hawking insects on 17-8-1984, alongwith many House Swifts (Apus affinis) and Dusky Crag Martins (Hirundo concolor) in the Jubilee Hills area of Hyderabad, at a small lake called Durug-ka-Talab. The white belly and throat, broken by a dark pectoral band and the comparative size difference between the other birds mentioned above, were good diagnostic pointers. Though this bird is spread over all India, its occurence almost within Hyderabad is interesting as it shows the existence of preferred habitats - hilly country with crags and precipices - in and around the city.

4) DARK GREY CUCKOO-SHRIKE Coracina melachistos

One male was seen in Indira Park (Hyderabad city) on 24th March, 1985, feeding quietly in the top storey of acacia trees. Tail tipped broadly white. Black wings. This bird is a winter straggler through Orissa, M.P. Andhra and Karnataka, and an altitudinal migrant in the Himalayas. Also reported from the Eastern Ghats in Andhra Pradesh (Price 1980) as being an uncommon winter visitor, recorded between Dec. 20th and March 22nd.

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* Price, T.D.(1980):- The Seasonality and Occurence of Birds in the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh - Jour. Bom. Nat. Hist. Society - 76(3) 379.

A LIST OF BIRDS SEEN AT KAMAREDDY, NIZAMABAD DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH

By:- M.S. Kulkarni, 3-3-948 Kutbiguda, Hyderabad - 500 027.

Kamareddy in Nizamabad District of Andhra Pradesh is located 115 kms. north-west of Hyderabad. Being in the arid zone, the birdlife is not very rich, but the vast stretches of 'wasteland' and open fields interspersed with small and medium sized irrigation tanks attract many varieties of birds. The observations carried out between January 1984 and February 1985 has made this list possible. However quite a few of the smaller birds could not be identified and many more could not have been seen by me during my limited observation periods.

Systematic List:-

1. LITTLE CORMORANT Phalacrocorax niger
2. GREY HERON Ardea cinerea
3. POND HERON Ardeola grayii
4. CATTLE EGRET Bubulcus ibis
5. LARGE EGRET Egretta alba
6. MEDIAN EGRET Egretta intermedia
7. LITTLE EGRET Egretta garzetta
8. WHITENECKED STORK Ciconia episcopus
9. BLACK IBIS Pseudibis papillosa
10. LESSER WHISTLING TEAL Dendrocygna javanica
11. BRAHMINY DUCK Tadorna ferruginea
12. PINTAIL Anas acuta
13. COMMON TEAL Anas crecca
14. SPOTBILL DUCK Anas poecilorhyncha
15. COMMON POCHARD Aythya ferina
16. BLACKWINGED KITE Elanus caerulus
17. PARIAH KITE Milvus migrans
18. BRAHMINY KITE Haliastur indus
19. SHIKRA Accipiter badius
20. LONGBILLED VULTURE Gyps indicus
21. SCAVENGER VULTURE Neophron percnopterus
22. MARSH HARRIER Circus aeruginosus
23. KESTREL Falco tinnunculus
24. COMMON QUAIL Coturnix coturnix
25. INDIAN MOORHEN Gallinula chloropus
26. COOT Fulica atra
27. BRONZEWINGED JACANA Metopidus indicus
28. REDWATTLED LAPWING Vanellus indicus
29. YELLOW-WATTLED LAPWING Vanellus malabaricus
30. COMMON SANDPIPER Tringa hypoleucos
31. LITTLE STINT Calidris minutus
32. BLACKWINGED STILT Himantopus himantopus
33. BLUE ROCK PIGEON Columba livia
34. RING DOVE Streptopelia decaocto
35. RED TURTLE-DOVE Streptopelia tranquebarica
36. SPOTTED DOVE Streptopelia chinensis
37. ROSERINGED PARAKEET Psittacula krameri
38. BLOSSOMHEADED PARAKEET Psittacula cyanocephala
39. COMMON HAWK CUCKOO Cuculus varius
40. KOEL Eudynamys scolopacea
41. CROW-PHEASANT Centropus sinensis
42. BARN OWL Tyto alba
43. SPOTTED OWLET Athene brama
44. PALM SWIFT Cypsiurus parvus
45. PIED KINGFISHER Ceryle rudis
46. COMMON KINGFISHER Alcedo athis
47. WHITEBREASTED KINGFISHER Halcyon smyrnensis
48. BLUETAILED BEE EATER Merops philippinus
49. SMALL GREEN BEE EATER Merops orientalis
50. INDIAN ROLLER Coracias benghalensis
51. HOOPOE Upupa epops
52. COMMON GREY HORNBILL Tockus birostris
53. CRIMSONBREASTED BARBET Megalaima haemocephala
54. REDWINGED BUSH-LARK Mirafra erythroptera
55. ASHYCROWNED FINCH-LARK Eremopterix grisea
56. DUSKY CRAG MARTIN Hirundo concolor
57. COMMON SWALLOW Hirundo rustica
58. [illegible]

58. WIRETAILED SWALLOW Hirundo smithii
59. REDRUMPED SWALLOW Hirundo daurica
60. GREY SHRIKE Lnius excubitor
61. RUFOUSBACKED SHRIKE Lanius scach
62. BROWN SHRIKE Lanius cristatus
63. GOLDEN ORIOLE Oriolus oriolus
64. BLACK DRONGO Dicrurus adsimilis
65. WHITEBREASTED DRONGO Dicrurus caerulescens
66. ROSY PASTOR Sturnus roseus
67. COMMON MYNA Acridotheres tristis
68. INDIAN TREE PIE Dendrocitta vagabunda
69. HOUSE CROW Corvus splendens
70. JUNGLE CROW Corvus macrorhynchos
71. LITTLE MINIVET Pericrocotus cinnamomeus
72. COMMON IORA Aegithinia
73. REDVENTED BULBUL Pycnonotus cafer
74. WHITEBROWED BULBUL Pycnonotus luteolus
75. LARGE GREY BABBLER Turdoides malcolmi
76. JUNGLE BABBLER Turdoides striatus
77. WHITEHEADED BABBLER Turdoides affinis
78. TICKELL'S BLUE FLYCATCHER Muscicapa tickelliae
79. ASHY WREN-WARBLER Prinia socialis
80. TAILOR BIRD Orthotomus sutorius
81. BLACK REDSTART Phoenicurus ochrurus
82. INDIAN ROBIN Saxicoloides fulicata
83. MAGPIE-ROBIN Copsychus saularis
84. BLUE ROCK THRUSH Monticula slitarius
85. YELLOW WAGTAIL Motacilla citreola
86. GREY WAGTAIL Motacilla caspica
87. LARGE PIED WAGTAIL, Motacilla maderaspatensis
88. TICKELL'S FLOWERPECKER Dicaeum erythrorhynchos
89. PURPLERUMPED SUNBIRD Nectarinia zeylonica
90. PURPLE SUNBIRD Nectarinia asiatica
91. HOUSE SPARROW Passer domesticus
92. BAYA Ploceus phillippinus
93. WHITETHROATED MUNIA Lonchura malabarica
94. SPOTTED MUNIA Lonchura punctulata
95. BLACKHEADED MUNIA Lonchura malacca

BEHAVIOUR OF BIRDS - 2

Continued from Vol.5, No.1, p.22

By: Siraj A. Taher, 6-3-249/3 Rd. No.1, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad - 500 034

INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOUR:

Those behaviours involved in the birds' own well being include - maintainence, food gathering, selection of habitats and play. Many of these are inherited behaviours and do not require practice.

Maintenance Behaviour:

Birds spend a lot of time in maintenance behaviours like taking care of their bodies and performing activities which are necessary for their general health, comfort and protection and these must continue to be performed day after day throughout the year. Maintenance behaviours include preening and head-scratching, bathing, oiling, sunning, anting & sleeping.

1. Preening and Head-scratching: Feathers, necessary for both flight and insulation must be in good condition at all times and as such, care of the feathers is very important for allbbirds. Preening includes the arrangement, cleaning and general care of the feathers. The bird will first fluff itself and preen the plumage with its bill, usually by twisting and turning and grasping one feather at a time and if one follows the movements closely, will find that all these movements are stereotyped & about the same for each part of the body and each feather every time the bird preens itself. Since it is not possible to preen the feathers on the head and the upper neck with it's beak, the birds use their feet to separate, clean and arrange the feathers there.

2. Bathing, oiling and sunning: Birds bathe mostly to clean their plumage or to wet their feathers and make them easier for preening. Most of the birds bathe in water but some birds like the House Sparrow (Passer domesticus) take a dust bath. There are several ways in which birds take a water bath. While some stand in the water or take a dip-and flip their wings, others do so in the dew on the grass and some others in the light showers of rain. Sometimes when you are out in the garden, watering the lawn or a rose bush, a Robin (Saxicoloides fulicata) might suddenly fly in and take a quick shower under the hose. Sunbirds (Nectarinidae) may also be seen behaving similarly. Swallows (Hirundinidae) when flying over a pond or any other surface of water will suddenly drop down repeatedly and skim the surface to wet their feathers. A wet bird is quite helpless against predators so it must dryitself quickly so as to enable itself to fly properly. For this almost all of them adopt a stereotyped action of shaking off the water by whirring their wings. Once the drying is over , the bird will touch with it's beak an oily gland at the base of its tail and transfer the oil to its feathers as it preens itself. This oiling aids in waterproofing the plumage which also prevents the feathers from drying out and breaking.

The habit of exposing the plumage and skin to the sun is fairly widespread amongst birds. Ruffling their feathers, they spread out their wings and tail and sit, stand or lie down in a variety of postures. This is very commonly seen in birds of prey. Although it has not yet been determined what is the cause and function of sunning, it is assumed that exposure to the sun is as beneficial to birds as it is to human beings. Certain water birds like the Darter (Anhinga rufa) whose feathers are not water-proofed, sun themselves dry after every drive into the water for food.

3. Anting: This is a peculiar behaviour noted in some woodpeckers (Picidae) and many species of song birds. In this, the birds allow ants to run through their feathers or rub ants in their plumage. A probable explanation for this behaviour would be the usefulness of the secretion of formic acid from the crushed ants in keeping off or killing certain parasites in the birds' feathers.

4. Comfort and sleeping: At times you would have seen a bird fluff it's feathers, shake them well and fold them back neatly before settling down. Sometimes birds are seen to stretch one leg and a wing as far as it can on one side and repeat the procedure on the other, while at other times it is observed standing on one leg or squatting. While some retract their heads to the shoulders, others will turn their heads and tuck it in under the wing. All these behaviours are performed to make itself comfortable.

Similarly the sleeping postures and positions adopted by different birds vary with the species. Normally the most common sleeping position observed in birds is with the head turned and the beak under the wing, but some birds like the pigeon (Columbidae) draw their head inwards, towards the shoulders and go to sleep with their beak pointing out.

Nightjars (Caprimulgidae) squat lengthwise on a branch while resting or sleeping and the Woodpeckers (Picidae) cling vertically to the trunk & the lorikeet (Loricus spp.) hang upside down when they sleep. Most water birds like geese and ducks (Anatidae) merely turn their head, tuck their bills under the wing and float on the water.

PROCURING FOOD:

One of the most important behaviours of the bird relate to their food gathering methods and techniques. To exploit the food sources available in the air, on the ground and in water, each species of bird has a fixed action pattern for obtaining it's own particular food and preparing it for eating. We are familiar with the ways in which the Indian Robin(Saxicoloides fulicata) seeks and eats the worms and so is the manner of a Shikra, (Accipiter badius) which kills, plucks and eats its own food in a set pattern. Different species use different sources of foods. The Bee-eaters (Meropidae) hawk their insect food in the air while the lapwings (Vanellidae) find their food on the ground and the cormorants, (Phalacrocoridae) fishes for their food deep in the water. When there are more than one species using just about the same type of food from the same source, they have different ways of gathering it; example, the Babblers (Timalinae) gather their insect food from the leaf litter by tossing the legfs aside with their beaks while the Jungle Fowl (Gallo-perdix spp.) push the litter away by scratching with their feet. Thus two different species of birds exploit two different levels on the ground for their their food. Similarly amongst the ducks (Anatidae) while some like the Shoveller (Anas clypeata) skims the water surface with its beak while swimming, to take the floating organism, the Common Pochard (Aythya ferina) dives deeper into the water to feed.

Food Preferences: Every species of bird has a preference for certain type and size of food. Small differences in the ease of handling certain types of food lead to a learned preference for the item the birds can manipulate most easily. Taking a bird of prey as an example, a particular specie from this group develops a preference for the largest prey it can handle efficiently, efficiency being measured by the weight of the consumable portion of the flesh a bird can extract in a given time. When the prey is too large, the increase in time taken to kill and eat it leads to a drop in efficiency. In other words the bigger prey is not worth the trouble it takes to killing it. Hence the bird of prey will choose a smaller prey. Similarly amongst the seed eaters, the bird prefers the largest seed it can extract the kernel from most efficiently with the least effort. Any seed larger than the prefered variety is just not worth the trouble.

HABITAT SELECTION:

Different species of birds live in different habitats. Little is known about why a particular bird selects a certain habitat. One reason could be 'imprinting' or the fact that it was born and grew up in that habitat. Another and more likely factor could be that the bird is responding to certain key factors of stimuli in that habitat—— factors like sufficient food and water, nesting sites, safety from predators and availability of perches etc. For birds living in groups or flocks like the ducks (Anatidae) or babblers (Timalinae), the presence of other members of the same species may be the deciding factor.

The habitat requirements of each species is different. In some, these requirements are very rigid while in others they are very liberal. The Siberian Cranes (Grus leucogeranus) breeds only in the snowy regions of Russia and parts of China and in India can only be found at Bharatpur during the winter. Other species like the Redvented Bulbul (Pyc-

notus cafer) is found to adapt itself more easily to several different areas where the habitat is identical. Certainly there is no species more opportunistic than the Robin (Saxicoloides fulicata) that manages to settle down and be at home in almost any kind of habitat, be it suburban or countryside, house back yard or open forest.

There are certain other species which show a tendency for opportunism and adapt themselves to a variety of habitats. Such opportunistic behaviour can be observed in some hole-nesting species like the Barn Owl (Tyto alba) and Hoopoes (Upupa epops) which nest in holes in buildings in disused buildings or others like the House Sparrow (Passer domesticus), Dusky Crag Martins and Swallows (Fam: Hirundidae) or Spotted Doves (Streptopelia sinensis) which nest in houses, tombs etc.

It is these opportunistic species of birds which are able to survive better in these times when the pressure on the habitats is so great and the groups which have rigid habits in either their food preference or habitat selection are the ones which are most endangered.

(To be continued)

A VISIT TO FOX SAGAR (JEEDIMITLA TANK) BY BSAP MEMBERS

By: T. Ganesh, 16/12 Sainagar Colony, Secubderabad - 500 015.
P. Kanniah, 128 Balaji Colony, Kakaguda, Secunderabad - 15.

It was a lovely spring morning of March. A thin mist hung in the air, dew sparkled the morning sun and birds flew out to begin another golden day. A bunch of birdwatchers from BSAP arrived on this day to Fox Sagar quite eager and bubbling in high spirits to watch the many birds that flock together here.

Fox Sagar is a fairly big irrigation tank, full of water throughout the year. It is about 16 kms. from Hyderabad on the Nagpur highway (N.H.7). A straight bund nearly 1½ kms. long stands on the southern side of its shore. On the other side of the bund cultivation of paddy is done, using water from Fox Sagar. There is also a fine water gate named 'FOX SAGAR' and re-built in 1897 which stands as a clear landmark to this place.

That morning - 10th March, 1985, when our group of birdwatchers landed there by cars and jeeps, we saw a low mist kissing the waters, but soon this lifted to reveal its strength of water birds. We walked a short distance along the bund from the water gate where we had parked our vehicles and saw some ducks, but they were too far for proper identification. A few birds of prey plus the many tiny-tots which flash past from bushes or sit back in them and spell out their melodious talk, were seen. Having walked for some time we all turned back and jumped into our vehicles, except Kanniah who smoothly rode on his bike quite nicely enjoying the scene and reached the eastern shore of the tank. It was here we saw many ducks bobbing in the waters closely. Theywere all colourful and beautiful, coming from lands far and near, and also some which were residents. We, for once got confused with the many varieties of ducks that

we stamped their respective names on other birds' back till we could sort them out properly. Some birds wonderfully displayed their colours in flight like the Cotton Tels. These teals with their metallic green wing bar were flying in a close squadron, uttering a cheerful twittering note which was a delight to hear.

The sun was climbing higher, dew had evaporated and the air was getting warmer. Now was our time to return, we shut our notebooks with more than 50 species of birds recorded, our binoculars and the 'birdies' in their vehicles. So that ended another jolly trip from BSAP members to observe nature and birds in particular around the city.

Now Fox Sagar was lying behind us awaiting another visit by BSAP members, but also it awaited others who came there to build industries and houses and pollute the tank with their urban refuse.How long would the crystal clear water of Fox Sagar remain like a 'crystal'? Would the birds be there to sing their melodious song when we visit them again? Well, only time can answer that. We can only hope forthe best.

A list of birds seen by us on that day is given below.We have included some species which we had seen earlier at Fox Sagar, which have been marked with an asterisk (*) on the left.

SYSTEMATIC LIST:

1. DABCHICK Podiceps ruficollis
2. *GREY HERON Ardea cinerea
3. *PURPLEHERON Ardea purpurea
4. POND HERON Ardeola grayii
5. LITTLE EGRET Egretta garzetta
6. *NIGHT HERON Nycticorax nycticorax
7. *OPENBILL STORK Anastomus oscitans
8. *WHITENECKED STORK Ciconia episcopus
9. PINTAIL Anas acuta
10. SPOTBILL DUCK Anas poecilorhyncha
11. WIGEON Anas penelope
12. GARGANEY TEAL Anas querquedula
13. REDCRESTED POCHARD Netta rufina
14. COTTON TEAL Nettapus coromandelianus
15. BLACKWINGED KITE Elanus caerulus
16. HONEY BUZZARD Pernis ptilorhynchs
17. PARIAH KITE Milvus migrans
18. BRAHMINY KITE Haliastur indus
19. *MONTAGU'S HARRIER Circus pygargus
20. *KESTREL Falco tinnunculus
21. COOT Fulica atra
22. BLACKWINGED STILT Himantopus himantopus
23. *PHEASANT-TAILED JACANA Hydrophasianus chirurgus
24. REDWATTLED LAPWING Vanellus indicus
25. YELLOW-WATTLED LAPWING Vanellus malabaricus
26. LITTLE RINGED PLOVER Charadrius dubius
27. GREEN SANDPIPER Tringa ochropus
28. SPOTTED SANDPIPER Tringa glareola
29. COMMON SANDPIPER Tringa hypoleucos
30. LITTLE STINT Calidris minutus
31. *BROWNHEADED GULL Larus brunnicephalus
32. *BLACKHEADED GULL Larus ridibundus
33. *WHISKERED TERN Chlidonias hybrida
34. *ROSERINGED PARAKEET Psittacula krameri

Systematic List: (Continued)

35.*BLOSSOMHEADED PARAKEET Psittacula cyanocephala
36.*PIED CRESTED CUCKOO Clamator jacobinus
37. KOEL Eudynamys scolopacea
38.*COUCAL (CROW-PHEASANT) Centropus sinensis
39.*SPOTTED OWLET Athene brama
40.*PALM SWIFT Cypsiurus parvus
41. PIED KINGFISHER Ceryle rudis
42. COMMON KINGFISHER Alcedo athis
43. WHITEBREASTED KINGFISHER Halcyon smyrnensis
44. SMALL GREEN BEE EATER Merops orientalis
45. INDIAN ROLLER Coracias benghalensis
46. HOOPOE Upupa epops
47. CRIMSONBREASTED BARBET Megalaima haemacephala
48. ASHYCROWNED FINCH-LARK Erymopterix grisea
49. COMMON SWALLOW Hirundo rustica
50. WIRETAILED SWALLOW Hirundo smithii
51. REDRUMPED SWALLOW Hirundo daurica
52.*BAYBACKED SHRIKE Lanius vittatus
53. RUFOUSBACKED SHRIKE Lanius schach
54.*BROWN SHRIKE Lanius cristatus
55. GOLDEN ORIOLE Oriolus oriolus
56. BLACK DRONGO Dicrurus adsimilis
57. ASHY SWALLOW-SHRIKE Artamus fuscus
58. BRAHMINY MYNA Sturnus pagodarum
59. ROSY PASTOR Sturnus roseus
60. COMMON MYNA Acridotheres tristis
61. HOUSE CROW Corvus splendens
62.*JUNGLE CROW Corvus macrorhynchos
63. REDVENTED BULBUL Pycnonotus cafer
64.*YELLOWEYED BABBLER Chrysomma sinense
65. COMMON BABBLER Turdoides caudatus
66. LARGE GREY BABBLER Turdoides malcolmi
67. WHITEHEADED BABBLER Turdoides affinis
68. INDIAN WREN-WARBLER Prinia subflava
69. STONE CHAT Saxicola torquata
70.*PIED BUSHCHAT Saxicola caprata
71. INDIAN ROBIN Saxicoloides fulicata
72. YELLOW WAGTAIL Motacilla cinerea
73. WHITE WAGTAIL Motacilla alba
74. LARGE PIED WAGTAIL Motacilla maderaspatensis
75.*PURPLERUMPED SUNBIRD Nectarinia zeylonica
76.*PURPLE SUNBIRD Nectarinia asiatica
77. BAYA Ploceus philippinus
78. STREAKED WEAVER BIRD Ploceus manyar
79. WHITETHROATEDMUNIA Lonchura malabarica

There were also some species of quail, birds of prey, larks, warblers and ducks which unfortunately we could not identify.

How does a frail looking bird like the Arctic Tern (Sterna paradisea) perform its marathon migration feat? Twice yearly this bird conducts a transglobal flight from one pole to the other. This involves a trip of around 40,000 Km. which means that the bird is on the wing non-stop for 8 months of the year. It feeds while travelling by plunging into the water to snap up fish in its beak.

(Nature Notes, Sanctuary Magazine)

OBSERVATIONS ON THE NESTING OF A SPOTTED DOVE (STREPTOPELIA CHINENSIS)

By:- Taqiuddin Ansari, 10-5-32/3/1, First Lancers, Masab Tank
Hyderabad - 500 028.

Area:- Masab Tank, Hyderabad City.
Habitat:- Residential colony with tall trees and a scarcity of shrubs.
Place of Nesting:- In a small shrub made up of a combination of pomogranate tree and a vine. It is fairly thick and looks impenetrable from the top. However from below, the nest, 12 feet from the ground, is visible as there is only a network of branches and no leaves to obstruct the view.

Observations:- The parent birds were first observed around the 15th of July 1985 sitting and moving around in the shrub in search of a place to build the nest or sitting on an electric wire above the shrub preening themselves and constantly engaged in calls of courtship typical of the species. On 18th July, 1985 a dove was observed attempting to build a nest at a height of 12 feet from the ground. However, showers distrupted the nest-making and the doves abandoned the nest and were not seen again till the 5th of August when they again started making the nest. (Does this mean that the female did not carry the eggs?). On 7th August a clear view of the nest was obtainedobtained when the bird left for foraging. It is a firm circular nest made up of small sticks placed in a trident-like fork with other supporting branches all around. On 8th and 9th August, a dove was observed sitting in the nest constantly.

10th August, 1985:- One egg in the nest was observed. The egg was white and almost transparent, probably because of sunlight. It might have been laid on 9th August. A point of interest is the absence of one bird from 7th August onwards. At least both the birds have not been seen together since then. Natural predators (like domestic cats and crows) do disturb the birds now and then but the nest as yet has not been discovered by them.

1350 Hours:- A bird on nest, disturbance by domestic cat (as close as 5 feet) but bird remains undisturbed.

1400 Hours:- Both birds seen together.

1500 Hours:- Heavy showers for about half an hour but cannot see whether the bird is on the nest or not.

11th August, 1985:- 0700 Hours: A bird on nest. Cannot see whether the second egg has been laid.

20th August, 1985:- 0900 Hours:- Heard the pair calling to each other and later saw one of them sitting on an electric wire above the nest and the other on the nest.

23rd August, 1985:- 0800 Hours:- Saw a bird calling and subsequently giving up incubation to the other.

1400 Hours:- Recovered the empty shell of an egg from the ground, seems as if the chick hatched either today or yesterday.

25th August, 1985:- 0600 Hours:- Saw the chick for the first time being fed by regurgitation. The feeding system is very similar to that of pigeons except that it is not so vigorous and the dove seemed to regurgitate with apparent ease unlike the pigeon which makes a distinct shuddering backward and downward motion of the neck.

Also the dove seems to tuck the food down into the chick's open beak which is a different method as compared to pigeons where the chicks beak is taken deep inside the adults' throat.

Rain has been a constant phenomena right from the time the nesting started.

28th August, 1985:- 0900 Hours: Saw a dove vacating the nest for the other which fed the chick. Only one chick observed in the nest.

29th August, 1985:- 0835 Hours: A dove moved into the nest and fed the chick.

30th August, 1985:- 0800 Hours: The nest was deserted by the doves for the whole day and the night with the chick lying still. It rained in the evening also when the chick was by itself. (Observations were made at 1300 hours and 1800 hours).

1st September, 1985:- 0700 Hours: Saw the chick being fed by a dove. Heard the chirp of the chick for the first time.

2nd September, 1985:- 0830 Hours: The chick being fed. Also the feeding system now resembles the pigeons very much, unlike the earlier period. The chick has now grown substantially with a small tail and wing feathers sprouting out around the head and wings.

4th September, 1985:- 0830 Hours: Nest found deserted though intact and, apparently not disturbed. Made a careful seach but did not find any evidence of a predator killing the chick. Nevertheless in my personal opinion the chick was not capable of flight as yet. At 1200 hours, 1630 hours and 1800 hours the parents were not seen.

5th September, 1985:- 0830 Hours: A dove descended on the nest and inspected it briefly before flying off.

Post Script:- The dove pair is regularly seem in the area and on the electric wire above the nesting place, however there is no sign of the juvenile.

UNUSUAL ACTIVITY AT A WATERHOLE IN YAMJAL

By:- Humayun Taher, 6-3-249/3, Rd. No:1, Banjara Hills,
Hyderabad - 500 034.

Yamjal is a fast developing town near the city of Hyderabad on the Nagpur highway. The natural vegetation of the area is good. The trees and bushes provide a scenic backdrop to the brick and cement structures of the town. All this vegetation naturally attracts a lot of birds as well the smaller animals. While staying in the hostel I have, with the aid of a torch, seen Foxes, Jackals and Hares.

I was staying at the hostel alongwith my classmates to prepare for the I.C.S.E. exam. One day, a holiday, we decided to go and buy some grapes at a nearby vineyard. Acccrdingly we set out after lunch and bought a generous quantity which disappeared in no time. On the way back we took a different route and after ten minutes of walking I noticed a large mound. A few birds were just landing behind it. I resolved to investigate it and accompanied by a friend who is also an avid nature lover I crept slowly upto the mound and peered over it.

The sight took my breath away. There was a small water hole hardly 10 square metres in area. Judging by the water marks on nearby rocks, it was once a part of stream feeding the lake. This waterhole surprisingly was not a spot used for watering the livestock because there were no cattle tracks in the vicinity. As a result the area was a mass of feathers. Waders probed busily in the mud. An egret solemnly on one leg in chest high water, the place echoed with the incessant call of the lapwings. Those winged predators, the kingfishers hovered untiringly over the surface of the water. A couple of cormorants basked lazily on the rocks.

My friend gasped in astonishment and the birds instantly took to the wing. A few minutes later, as if on a spoken order, they settled down together. We made an exact count of all the species of birds we saw there. The list of birds is given below.

1.	Little Cormorant	*Phalacrocorax niger*	2
2.	Pond Heron	*Ardeola grayii*	2
3.	Cattle Egret	*Bubulcus ibis*	1
4.	Redwattled Lapwing	*Vanelus indicus*	3
5.	Yellow-wattled Lapwing	*Vanellus malabaricus*	5
6.	Green Sandpiper	*Tringa ochropus*	2
7.	Common Sandpiper	*Tringa hypoleucos*	3
8.	Little Stint	*Calidris minutus*	45 (approx.)
9.	Blackwinged Stilt	*Himantopus himantopus*	15
10.	Common Kingfisher	*Alcedo atthis*	1
11.	Whitebreasted Kingfisher	*Halcyon smyrnensis*	2

This unusual activity of birds may be due to the fact that the lake had shrunk and all the forms of life in the water got confined to a smaller area and therefore the puddle was probably teeming with life. This abundance of food may be the reason for the large number of birds at the waterhole.

BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY

By:- O.C. Edwards, ARPS, EFIAP, 5-9-85 Public Garden Road
Hyderabad - 500 001.

I feel certain that every birdwatcher must have, at some time or another, fervently wished that he could have recorded photographically what he saw. Some photographs are of value not only to him but to posterity. Since a photograph is equal to 'a thousand words', photography is the medium, par excellence, of collecting information of great value to natural history. In addition to this, capturing the beauty of birds, especially in colour, together with the attendant excitement and thrills and the ensuing satisfaction, render photography 'a consummation devoutly to be desired'.

Let us consider some of the various conditions under which birds may be photographed.

(a) When they come to drink water, or when they normally frequent the water's edge, or when they spend most of their time on the water, or on trees in lakes. Here a long focus tele is a 'must' since the birds do not permit a near approach. One may use a hide or a boat camouflaged and get interesting photographs using tele lens.

(b) Birds may be brought to a particular spot by using as bait the kind of food they are used to eating. A previously constructed hide is entered when the birds have grown used to the spot and many photographs may be taken.

(c) The photographer, armed with a long tele, may frequent the habitat of birds and stalk them. He must move silently and smoothly, avoiding sudden or jerky movements. Natural poses may be captured.

(d) At-the-nest photography. There are thos who look down upon such photographs, saying they are easy since the bird must come to the nest to feed the young.Poor results are easy to get, but really good photographs are quite another kettle of fish. Besieds, such photos give a great deal of information about the bird since they show the situation chosen by the bird, their nests, their young, the adult birds and the food they bring their young.

Several birds nest on the ground in the open. For such a hide is necessary. This should be set up fairly far from the nest, say 20 paces. When the bird accepts this and shows no fear, it can be moved upto 10 paces. After this is accepted, the hide can be fixed 5 paces from the nest. Later it may be placed 8 or 10 pacesfrom the nest. Now, using a tele lens, several photos may be taken from the hide, or by gradually getting the bird used to the tripod and camera, photos may be taken by remote control from the hide. In this case the camera with the normal lens may be used even as close as 3 or 4 feet from the nest. All this may take several hours or, in some cases, 2 or 3 days. But the hide must not be left unguarded for it sometimes disappears ordraws attention to the nest and then it disappears.

The smae technique may be used for nestsin bushes. Thin branches and leaves obstructing the view must be tied away but <u>not cut off</u>. After the photographing is finished the nest should be left in the same condition in which it was found.

When the nest is in a tree, this gradual approach may not be possible as there may be only one branch suitable for the camera for remote control. In such a case, the camera support or bracket could be fixed first and, if accepted, the camera could be put up with h the lems covered. If accepted, the flash-lamp could go on and the remote control apparatus attached. Some use radio-control, others use an electric release. I use an air-release. The old fishing-line method of releasing the shutter is not very satisfactory.

<u>Some important precautions:-</u>

(a) Do not keep the parent birds off the nest for long periods. Nests exposed to the sun need the parents to 'parasol' the young. In some cases the young are known to die within 15 or 20 minutes if exposed to the hot sun.

(b) Nests with newly hatched young are best left alone till the young are stronger.

(c) Try not to let young boys or crows watch you, for, as soon as you go, they do their damage.

(d) In general, if a bird shows fear and does not come to the nest even after waiting an hour or two, it is wise to abandon photography.

(e) Doves, as a rule, feed their young only three or four times a day, so the waits are long.

Other precautions will suggest themselves to the photographer who loves birds and realises that no matter how good a chance may be it should not be taken if, by doing so, one is likely to cause the death of a bird.

COURTING BEHAVIOUR OF THE CRIMSONBREASTED BARBET OR COPPERSMITH (MEGALAIMA HAEMOCEPHALA)

By:- Aasheesh Pittie, 14-7-370 Begum Bazar, Hyderabad - 500 012.

In January 1985, we had moved to our house in Banjara Hills (Hyderabad) for a few days. Unfortunately I went down with an attack of chicken pox and had to confine myself to a room for the twenty odd days of my stay there. My initial disappointment faded when I realised what thrills birding can give me even from a window, in this lovely residential area of Hyderabad. One extremely interesting observation was of the behaviour of a pair of Coppersmiths Megalaima haemocephala.

I had taken note of the increase in calls per day of these birds. They would perch atop trees and call mostly in the mornings & late afternoons (though early morning was spent sunning with fluffed feathers). But bouts of "wut, wut,wut" were not uncommon in the afternoons. Both birds vocalised individually and together (less frequently than they did individually). Their territory seemed pretty well defended because I did not see another (third) Coppersmith interacting with them on any day.

On the 23rd of January, 1985 I saw the pair courting. They were in the uppermost branches of a mango tree. 'The male (I have presumed the sexes from the following behaviour) arrives with some pulpy (drupe?) mass in his beak, making a nasal grating sound - "krrr,krr, krrr". He lands in front and above the female, who is squatting low on the branch, and constantly bobs his body as though wanting to feed her. All the while he holds his wings half open and shivers them like a young bird begging for food. The female remains squatted when he climbsonto her back, the wings still a-quiver and food in bill. He then gets off and climbs on again. He is calling throughout this performance. Then he steps down and the female straightens. He feeds her the pulpy stuff from his bill. Both are perched side by side, preening. He flies off.'

For three days I observed these birds going through this routine, inumerable times a day. The males' harsh calls were loud enough for me to hear in my room and draw my attention, and the pair invariably courted just outside my windows. Generally the behaviour was the same throughout the three days, though there were minute changes now and then. The male did not mount the female always when he brought her food. The harsh call was uttered whenever he approached her with his beak full. The wings always vibrated in her presence, untill he had fed her. Then he did not vibrate them. A few times I saw him feed her immediately on arrival, but mostly only after he had tread on her back. After he had fe her, he would invariably move to another branch and either wipe his bill or preen (only after wiping his bill) or just sit for a few moments, before flying off. Occasionally he flew off immediately after feeding. Most of the court-

ship-feeding activity was done in the morning and late noon, though the male brought food to the female at any odd hour of the day also.

Twice I saw the female enter a nest hole, about 20 feet up a tree, in a dead branch - at an approximately 75° angle to the ground. She remained within for 5 to 15 minutes. When the male arrived and called (the "wut,wut," call), she came out onto the tree trunk, but did not call nor did she fly to him. Later she came out when he was gone. No digging, cleaning etc. of the hole was seen.

The most fascinating part of this observation is that when the male mounted the female, I did not see them touch their bodies together. They did not seem to mate on any of the occasions he mounted her! I saw him just treading upon her squatted body and do his calling and wing-shiverring act. Observations had to be broken off as we moved back again and my health still restricted my movements.

Incidentally, the nesting season of this bird is believed to extend from November to June, mainly February to April. Two broods in a season are not uncommon. I have records of one nest in April, 1983 and another in March, 1984, from different parts of Hyderabad.

NELAPATTU AND PULICAT BIRD SANCTUARIES IN ANDHRA PRADESH AFTER THE NOVEMBER, 1984 CYCLONE

Report compiled by:- Siraj A. Taher

On 14th November, 1984, a severe cyclonic storm with wind speeds of 180 km.p.h. swept the Nellore District coast of Andhra Pradesh, where two of the major bird sanctuaries, Nelapattu and Pulicat are located (between 80°35' - 80°15' N and 13°30' - 13°55' E). The cyclone resulted in extensive breaches of small bunds and roads & also uprooted many trees. The damage caused to the bird habitat and birds was no less. Newspapers carried reports of tank and road breaches in Nelapattu sanctuary. Birdwatcher's Society of A.P. gathered first hand information from various sources on the damage to the bird sanctuaries and their gradual resettlement. The following report is based on information gathered from:

A. Andhra Pradesh Forest Department (Wildlife Wing) - Hyderabad.

B. Range Rovers Foundation, Madras. (RRF)

C. Research Team, Dept. of Zoology, Osmania University, Hyderabad.

D. Personal visit of the author to Nelapattu and Pulicat

A) Report from the A.P. Forest Dept. (Wildlife Wing) - (Verbatim)

The following are the details of the cyclonic storm and the resultant damage to the Nelapattu and Pulicat Bird Samctuaries in Nellore Dist. of A.P., as given by the A.P. Forest Dept. and also gathered from discussions with the concerned officials of the Wildlife Wing of the Department.

1) Extensive damage to Nelapattu main tank bund occured owing to a breach created by the falling of huge trees. Many trees in the

main tank as well as the small tank have been uprooted. Heavy erosion of the bunds has been noted.

2) Lots of birds (Pelicans, storks, cormorants, ducks & waders) have been killed. Eventhough a definite figure is not known, the mortality is reported to be high.

3) The water in the tanks has completely drained out owing to the breaches.

4) The local forest officials, as well as some from Hyderabad visited the area to assess the damage and to take whatever remedial measures required and possible.

B) Report from the Range Rovers Foundation, Madras. (Extracts)

The Range Rovers Foundation, Madras, in a report (mimeographed) dated 25th December, 1984 and accompanied by photographs of the cyclone damage at Nelapattu and Pulicat sanctuaries reported the following:

A team of 5 members from the R.R.F. visited Nelapattu on 9.12.1984.

Observations:

Small Tank: The small tank called Athigunta had breached and the water level had dropped to 2 metres. (Full tank level - 6 m.). Nearly 60 Spotbilled Pelican Pelecanus philippensis, many in breeding plumage were seen perched on about 14 Barringtonia trees. No nest building activity noted. Other birds seen (an approximate count, 50 Cormorants (Phalacrocorax spp.), 90 Openbill Storks Anastomus oscitans, several Night Herons Nycticorax nycticorax (adults and sub-adults). Rise in water level above the laterite lining of the bund had caused slipping of the stones and heavy erosion to the top section. Barringtonia trees on the bund had their roots exposed due to soil erosion. Many trees seen broken or completely uprooted. A few dead birds seen entangled in the vegetation on the bund.

Big Tank: A tank of very large capacity, it was completely dry except for a small pool of water. Due to rains and cyclone the water level was reported to have risen upto the top of the bund and a very heavy gale uprooted a huge mango tree on the bund which created a wide breach (about 20 m. wide and 4 m. deep). Reportedly, in 4 to 6 hours the entire tank was emptied and flooded a wide expanse of the area on the lower side of the bund. The impact of the cyclonic gales had resulted in birds falling in the water and being killed or washed away. There were many dead birds entangled in the branches and roots of the uprooted trees. These included - spotbilled pelicans, openbill storks, cormorants, mynas, egrets, herons etc. Four trees were completely uprootedand nearly 20 were mere stumps. The mud from the breached bund was spread over nearly 5-7 acres of good arable lamd.

Village: No damage to the village except the goats and cattle which perished in the waters. The loss of birds whom they had been protecting for over 150 years was lamented by the villagers. Extensive loss of crops. The villagers were of the opinion that the breach must be closed if the next monsoon rains are to fill up the tank. About 200 acres are cultivated twice a year. 15 acres of paddy transplantings were completely lost. Both the villagers and the birds were dependant on the water from the tank.

Action suggested by the Range Rovers Foundation.

1) Breaches to be closed and strengthened. Bunds to be lined with stone and cemented.

2) A wier, at least 2 metres below the maximum bund level to be constructed and the water channelised in case of overflow. Tall trees to be cut down to reduce height. Suitable shrubs planted on the bund and outer facing to prevent erosion.

3) More nesting trees to be planted in the tank bed during the dry season. Since the tank is dry right now (9.12.84), the tree planting (barringtonia spp.) is done now, they will have better survival chances.

4) Since Nelapattu is an important breeding place in India of the Spotbilled Pelican Pelecanus philippensis, the Chief Conservator of Forests, Govt. of A.P. and the Dept. of Environment, Govt. of India should take immediate steps to rehabilitate the lake area and the surrounds to facilitate the pelicans to start breeding.

Damage at Pulicat as reported by the Range Rovers Foundation:

1) Sriharikota road washed away at several places.

2) Hundreds of pelicans, flamingoes, painted storks, cormorants and other water birds perished due to very high velocity winds and lashing rains. Several dead birds were seen in the water & on the ground.

3) Small rivulets flowing into the lake had made into a huge sheet of water.

4) Nearly 80 live pelicans and 1000^{+++} flamingoes were counted in the lagoon besides several ducks and waders by the thousands.

C) Annual Report for 1985 of the Dept. of Environment sponsored Project under MAB programme of the Dept. of Zoology, Osmania University, Hyderabad.

(Extracts)

In 1984 a gratifying factor has been the increase in the pelican population in the Pulicat lake area. This area was also found prone to the cyclone. The Project workers made a trip to the area after the mid-Novemebr, 1984 cyclone and surveyed the impact of the cyclone on the bird population. The following observations were made:

1) It was found that some anticipatory dispersal of select members of the mixed bird population normally resident at Nelapattu and Pulicat environs had taken place. Nevertheless, there was extensive damage and high mortality including loss of eggs at both the places. The tank bund at Nelapattu had breached draining the waters from the main irrigation tank. Several barringtonia trees used by the pelicans for nesting were uprooted.

2) The residual birds were resorting to a crowded existence on the remaining barringtonia trees including those which were earlier not normally used for nesting in the lake adjoining the Nelapattu main tank.

Suggestions for restoration work:

1) Habitat restoration work must be done expeditiously by the concerned Government departments.

2) Possible rescue and rehabilitation of adult birds and chicks to different lakes nearby or to the Vishakapatnam Zoo for later release in the wild.

Observations:

Possible anticipatory dispersion to the other lakes and watersheds was verified. The following significant observations were made at different nearby places.

1. Vedanthangal (Tamil Nadu)- A water bird sanctuary about 65 kms. south of Madras City had a larger than usual bird count, including Spotbilled Pelicans.

2. Kolleru (A.P.) - About 300 kms. north of Nelapattu, it had large assemblies of water fowls like ducks, geese and waders. No pelicans were recorded.

3. Telineelapuram (Srikakulam Dt., A.P.) - Nearly 900 kms. north of Nelapattu, it attracted many more birds than normally seen here. More than normal numbers of Spotbilled Pelicans Pelecanus philippensis and Painted Storks Mycteria leucocephala at nearby villages and tanks. Despite 1984-85 being a drought year, very large congregations of water fowls were attracted to the Naupada swamps nearby and the adjoining foraging grounds.

D) Personal observations at Pulicat and Nelapattu:

I personally visited Pulicat lagoon (28.12.84) and Nelapattu (29th December, 1984). Both these bird sanctuaries had been severely affected by the cyclone of 14th November, but the devastation at Nelapattu was more. My observations at the two places are briefly given below.

Pulicat:

The Sriharikota road was under repairs. Extensive damage. Sulurpet, Nayudupet and Tada railway stations showed signs of extensive cyclone damage. Railway tracks and bridges were very badly affected. Water stagnation in all low level areas with the small streams in the area having a good flow. Lush vegetation. A few uprooted trees on the approaches to the lagoon still lying around. Some seem to have been hacked and carried away.

Bird life: It is nearly 1½ months after the cyclone hence the bird activity seemed near normal. Greater Flamingoes Phoenicopterus roseus and Painted Storks Mycteria leucocephala seen in small flocks. No Spotbilled Pelicans sighted. Some flocks of ducks near the islands in the lagoon. Waders seen on the shore. Two Ospreys Pandion haliaetus and one White-bellied Sea-Eagle Haliaetus leucogaster seen. Several Brahminy Kites Haliastur indus flying around. One on the ground feeding on a fish. In general the bird populations were very low as compared to January 1983 when I last visited this place.

Enquiries from the local villagers revealed that the loss of bird

life soon after the cyclone was quite high especially on the islands in the lagoon. These people also mentioned about large flocks of b birds which had congregated at Pulicat, having left the place (reportedly flying southwards) shortly before the cyclone struck.

Nelapattu:

The large lake was completely empty except for a small patch of water in the middle. There were several uprooted trees, some in the lake bed and others on the bund. A huge mango tree which had fallen due to the heavy gales and soil erosion caused by the rains had created a very wide breach in the embankment. This apparently was the single cause for the breach and the resultant draining off of the tank water. Some of the uprooted trees had been hacked off and the wood carried away by the villagers. A few stumps of once large trees were mute witnesses to the havoc caused in the area. Heavy soil erosion was observed on the embankments. Decaying shrubs and bushes were all over the place.

Bird life: Heavy congregationsof birds on the available trees. Some Spotbilled Pelicans Pelecanus philippensis seen perched on the trees alongwith Openbill Storks Anastomus oscitans, Little Egrets Egretta garzetta and one Little Cormorant Phalcrocorax niger. At the water's edge, Pond Herons Ardeola grayii, Large Pied Wagtails Motacilla maderaspatensis, Yellow Wagtails Motacilla flava, sandpipers (Tringa sp.) and Blackwinged Stilts Himamtopus himamtopus were seen feeding. Eventhough there was a good variety of birds were seen in the area their numbers were far fewer than soon on the previous occasion, about two years back. The dispersal of birds was noticeable as they were seen spread over a very large area and a couple of pelicans & a few painted storks were observed at the small ditches of water almost upto the Doraivarichatram railway station.

Conclusion: The abovementioned observations are just the first reports of the cyclonic damage. The full impact and the rehabilitation and adaptation of the birds to the changed circumstances can be determined only after further visits to the areas and detailed study of all the related aspects.

STATE BIRD OF ANDHRA PRADESH

Mr. V.S. Sastry, Prinicipal Chief Conservator of Forests, Government of Andhra Pradesh announced that the Indian Roller or Blue Jay has been designated as the 'State Bird of Andhra Pradesh' (Deccan Chronicle, 1.7.1985).

The Blue Jay is considered as an auspicious bird in A.P. and the people consider it a good omen to see it on festive occasion, especially on Dasserah day.

Common Name: Indian Roller or Blue Jay; Telugu: Pala Pitta
Scientific name: Coracias benghalensis; Urdu: Sabzak

The same notification states that the Black Buck (Antelope cervicapra) has been designated the State Animal and the Neem tree, (Azadirachta indica) as the State Tree.

(One of our member, Mr. Deepak Chowdhury had advocated the case to make the Blue Jay as the State Bird--See MAYURA, Vol:5(1)p.29)

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

I. Additions to the birds of Ethipothala Falls, Nagarjunasagar Dam, (MAYURA, Vol:5, No.2)

By: Aasheesh Pittie, 14-7-370 Begum Bazar, Hyderabad - 500 012.

A list of the birds of the Ethipothala Falls, Nagarjunasagar Dam, had appeared in a previous issue of MAYURA (5:2 p.38) wherein the authors Choudhury et al., had listed 51 species of birds seen on 19-6-1984. 54

On 2nd March, 1985, B.C. Choudhury, N. Shiva Kumar, K. Varaprasad and I had gone on a birding trip to the same region and listed 42 species of which the following are additions to the previous list.

1. Indian Longbilled Vulture Gyps indicus
2. Indian Sandgrouse Pterocles exustus
3. Brown Fish Owl Bubo zeylonensis
4. Bluetailed Bee Eater Merops philippinus
5. Common Grey Hornbill Tockus birostris
6. Crimsonbreasted Barbet Megalaima haemocephala
7. Rufoustailed Finch-Lark Ammomanes phoenicurus
8. Common Swallow Hirundo rustica
9. Golden Oriole Oriolus oriolus
10. Whitebellied Drongo Dicrurus caerulescens
11. Tree Pie Dendrocitta vagabunda
12. Jungle Crow Corvus macrorhynchos
13. Yellow-eyed Babbler Chrysomma sinensis
14. Whitebrowed Fantail Flycatcher Rhipidura aureola
15. Magpie Robin Copsychus saularis
16. Blue Rock Thrush Monticola solitarius
17. House Sparrow Passer domesticus

These bring the list of birds for this particular valley upto SIXTY EIGHT species.

II. Decrease In Rainfall And Its Effect On Birds At Fox Sagar

By: T. Ganesh, 16/112 Sainagar Colony, Trimulgherry, Secunderabad-15;
& P. Kanaiah, 128 Balaji Colony, Kakaguda, Secunderabad - 15.

The annual South-West monsoon lasts for about 4 months from June to September around Hyderabad often spilling into October. Since 1983 rainfall has been decreasing as per our recording at Alwal, some 5 kms. south-east of Fox Sagar. The rainfall had been at a peak in 1983 (830 mm) decreasing to 537 mm in 1984 and 404 mm in 1985. This decrease in rains had an apparent effect during 1985 on the water level at Fox Sagar and the birds coming there.

The change in water level lead to a change in the habitat and the birds seen during '85 can roughly be divided into those seen during pre-monsoon and post-monsoon seasons comprising the '84-'85 and the '85-'86 migratory seasons respectively.

PRE-MONSOON:- Considering the first six months of the year under h this heading, the following observations were made.

* The water surface was extensive and also deep at many places. No major disturbance was present except for a few fishermen and shep- along the southern shores. The habitat was that of any freshwater lake.

* Birds were many especially ducks, teals and cormorants. There were some 6 species of migratory ducks upto March end but it was the number of each species which filled the lake! Once we counted nearly 200 Spotbills (Anas poecilorhyncha), 100 Little Cormorants (Phala- crocorax niger) and others varying from 10 to 30. The quacking of these ducks, teals, and cormorants was a familiar sound then. Wad- ers were few, probably due to the coarse shores on the north and the overgrown ones to the east and west. Other usual birds like egrets, herons, lapwings and wagtails were ofcourse present.

POST-MONSOON:- During the latter half of the year, inspite of the rains, the water level kept skrinking, exposing the lake bed slowly. The shores were now devoid of vegetation and were either squelchy or sandy. Many sand bars came into sight which gave it a look of an estuary.

Birds were now mainly those of marshland and shore. With the coming of migratory season, numerous waders flocked here including the coastal Dunlin (Calidris alpina) and others like Curlew (Numenius arquata) and Blacktailed Godwits (Limosa limosa). Plovers, wagtails, stilts, terns, egrets, herons, birds of prey like Marsh Harrier, (Circus aeroginosus), Peregrine Falcon (Falco peregrinus), kites, eagles, Kestrels (Falco tinnunculus), all flocked in here. Ducks, teals and cormorants become rarer. Occasionally a few would come but mainly they rested on the shores and took off from there. The reason for all this could be the shallowness of the lake which all- owed the fishermen and cowherds to walk through the deepest part of the lake. This was a big disturbance for them (the birds). Another reason could be the lack of vegetation around where the waterfowl could hide.

Thus Fox Sagar has turned from a lake for chikhand teal to a shallow one for waders which in turn attracted the raptors - in just twelve months.

III. A Different Way Of Feeding By Little Egrets (Egretta garzetta) And A Pond Heron (Ardeola grayii)

By: T. Ganesh, 16/112 Sainagar Colony, Trimulgherry, Sec'bad-15
and P. Kanaiah, 128, Balaji Colony, Kakaguda, Sec'bad-15

By the evening of 26th November, 1985, we had observed a few Little Egrets (Egretta garzetta) feeding while flying over the water at Fox Sagar. Our observations are given below.

1. Some 4 Little Egrets were flying about 15 feet above the water in the company of 10 River Terns (Sterna aurantia), few gulls and Brahminy Kites (Haliastur indus).
2. The flying egrets very often banked in the air and dived,

bringing their bill and feet simultaneously in contact with the water to grab a fish. Sometimes they were lucky but more often the fish was the victor. Once a fish even escaped from the bill.

3. The egrets' method was similar to that of the River Terns. Both flew contninuously for for about 10-12 minutes and then dived in a similar manner.

4. Other Little Egrets were feeding in their usual manner along the shores. These repulsed the flying ones when they tried to land near them with loud raucous calls. Some were even chased for a short distance. Could there be a reason here for the flying egrets to adopt this method?

5. Activity of the egrets increased with the departure of the terns, late in the evening and then stopped abruptly.

Apart from the egrets there was one Pond Heron (Ardeola grayii) which was flying about like the egrets and dived with its bill first coming in contact with water like a Pied Kingfisher (Ceryle rudis). This was observed later in the evening.

Earlier observations: On 28th June 1984, at Shamirpet we saw 6 Little Egrets flying very low and close to the water surface against a strong S.W. wind for a short distance and the returning back to start all over again. On their head-wind flight, they jabbed at the water very often and those lucky to catch anything went away towards the shore to finish off. There were no other egrets anywhere around. At Fox Sagar on 26th November, there was no wind and the egrets flew at much higher altitude than at Shamirpet.

IV. Observations on Pariah Kites (Milvus migrans)

1) By: D. Sreekanth, 16-2-738/4/6 Malakpet, Hyderabad - 500 036.

I had been to the All India Industrial Exhibition on the 6th of February, 1985. While wandering inside the grounds I took a casual look up into the sky and spotted a big bird with slow wing beats. But its profile not like that of a bat. Gripped by enthusiasm I waited a while to have a closer look when it comes into the range of the lights. As it came into the range I saw that it was not a bat but a Pariah Kite. A Pariah Kite soaring in the sky at 8 p.m. was obviously an unusual scene.

As I moved to the interior of the grounds I saw a big congregation of Pariah Kites circling the area at a height of about 30-40 feet. The soaring birds were largely attracted by the foodstuffs and other edibles thrown all over the ground but were taken aback by the crowd. This new adaptation in its usual life style seems interesting to ponder over. Perhaps a tinge of optimism and a ray of hope kept them soaring even in the darkness.

2) By: Deepak Chowdhury, Reserve Bank of India, Hyderabad.

Recently I went to New Delhi (20th to 26th February, 1985) and at Ghaziabad (U.P.), there is a garbage ground where garbage is brought from Delhi and surrounding industrial areas to be dumped. At that particular ground there were 300-400 Pariah Kites, all facing away from the sun as if basking. A similar situation I recalled was my visit to

Vanasthalipuram where at a particular spot, the left overs from the slaughter houses is dumped. There, we, the members of BSAP saw various vultures (Whitebacked, Longbilled, Scavenger and King) basking in the sun in a similar manner, in hundreds.

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V. A Note On The Aerial Display Of The Shikra (Accipiter badius)

By: Aasheesh Pittie, 14-7-370 Begum Bazar, Hyderabad - 500 012.

Between 7 and 28 January 1985, I was confined to our house in Banjara Hills due to an illness and had a good opportunity of watching birds. There was a pair of Shikras (Accipiter badius) resident in our garden and this note is of their behaviour. They would call frequently call all day and their fascinating nuptial aerial displays kept me intrigued all the time. During this period they had a different call from the regular drongo-like "tit-tiu", which sounded like "tiu-tit", and was uttered from a perch only, although the former call was uttered in flight too. According to the Handbook, their breeding period is overall March to June, varying locally.

Their aerial displays comprised of either soaring together in circles or splitting away and joining again to form two circles. These latter usually overlap. Occasionally in the day, a bird would execute a deliberate and slowed-down flap of the wings in an arched or hunched sort of posture (of the body), with the tail raised at a slight angle. The white rump was conspicuous at such times. Their spectacular dives over open ground often ended when the dived into a tree, coming onto a branch (almost standing on their tail!) and perching to call. At such times, the call uttered would be the varied 'breeding' two syllable "tui-tit". This was uttered a couple of times and then the piercing double whistle of the Shikra. A few times in the day they also did the jerk-tumble which the Blue Rock Pigeon (Columba livia) does so often. These display flights would take place throughout the day but with a concentration in the mornings.

Once two pairs were seen going at each other - feigning, diving, etc. and then separating . Once a Shikra cahsed an eagle (Aquila rapax?) constantly buzzing and diving at it. The latter was mostly unconcerned. One evening (1630 hours) I inadvertently disturbed a Shikra which was feeding on a Calotis versicolor.

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VI. Observations On The Whitebreasted Waterhen (Amaurornis phoenicurus).

By: Rajeev Mathew, 6-3-912/1 Somajiguda, Hyderabad - 500 482.

The Whitebreasted Waterhen (Amaurornis phoenicurus) is a permanent resident around Hyderabad. It is a very shy bird and at the slightest disturbance races for cover where it has a wonderful way of hiding and will not put in an appearance for quite a long time. This bird has fascinated me from around 1978 when I stayed at a place adjacent to the Public Gardens. The thing that fascinates me about this bird even today is its call. It is quite eerie and spell-binding and can be heard mostly during the monsoons. It calls from a tree or a bush late in the evening. A most graphic description is given by EHA (E.H. Aitken), " Anything more unearthly proceeding from the throat

of a bird I have never heard. It began with loud harsh roars which might have elicited from a bear by roasting it slowly over a large fire, then suddenly changedto a clear note repeated like the 'coo' of a dove." I have searched in vain for the nest of this bird, trampling through the muck and getting into bamboos, but I have never got one though I have a strong suspicion that once or twice I was very close to it.

The young birds are black and can swim easily and I have seen young which I presume to be just a few days old in the month of July. 3 or 4 are seen with the parents. They feed on insects and water weeds and walk over the lotus leaves like a Jacana. The young birds I observed were never fed by the adults and they seemed to know the right food. The young ones are more timid than the adults and seek cover even if an unfamiliar shadow passes over them. I later came to know why! Four chicks and an adult parent were feeding on the edge of the pond close to the Asif Tennis Club in the Public Gardens. One chick got separated from the group. It was just about two or three yards from the rest when down dropped a female Shikra (Accipiter badius) and made off with the young chick which was screaming in vain. The adult parent birds made for some reeds with the 'cluck-cluck' call while the young ones ran a little and then sat down and did not move for almost half an hour. After this incident the family was very cautious, never venturing far from cover. I learnt a thing or two from this incident. A Shikra will not attack a group of birds. but will single out one to attack. Expanding this theory there is evidence in the way small birds, especially the waders fly. They fly in flocks and so, to a bird of prey, which is attacking, it is rather difficult to single out one from the flock.

Coming back to the Waterhen, it is a shame that the Public Gardens will never be what it was and I loathe to think that when I get back to the place the next time, I may never hear this little bird in the once secure and ideally suited habitat. The bamboo is being cut and the habitat destroyed systematically.

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VII. An Unidentified Bird

By: Humayun Taher, 6-3-249/3 Rd. No.1, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad -15.

On a field trip to Fox Sagar (Jeedimetla) on 27th October 1985, I saw a large Gull which I could not identify. I give below a description of the bird and hope someone can identify it for me.

Size: Crow +

Description & Flight: A bird of uniform white colour with black primaries. Two black bands on the tail. Legs webbed and yellow in colour. The beak was orange with a black spot near the tip. A black spot behind the eye. The colours visible in flight were ash-grey on the top of the wings with about one-third black, the black stretching from the tip a couple of inches inwards. From below the body was white. The wings were of the same white colour but the tips were again black. No mirrors were visible in flight or while resting.

Behaviour: When first seen the bird was soaring over the water, but soon it landed on a sandbank and began to preen

I crept quite close to it but the bird was completely indifferent to my presence. After remaining on the sand bank for a few minutes, it took off and landed in the water, At the approach of a few fishermen, it took off and vanished over the bund of the lake

Looking through various books including the Handbook Vol.3, I find that the birds' description closely fits that of the Lesser Black-backed Gull (Larus fuscus), though it seems far out of its normal range.

Note Ed: (A.P.) - Could it be the Immature Blackheaded Gull?

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VIII. Early Sighting of Pied Crested Cuckoo (Clamator jacobinus)

By: T. Gamesh, 16/112 Sainagar Colony, Secunderabad - 500 015.
& P. Kanaiah, 128 Balaji Colony, Kakaguda, Secunderabad - 15.

On 31st March 1985, we went to Fox Sagar in the evening. Good rains during the last two days had turned the ground green with tender shoots of grass and filled all the ponds and ditches full with water. These small ponds attracted large number of insects which in turn attracted many kinds of birds to them. Swallows were hawking in the airwhile the egrets and herons had their on the ground. Looking at these scenes enacted before us, our sight drifted to a bird flashing past a bush in a contrasting hue of black and white. Later we found that it was a Pied Crested Cuckoo (Clamator jacobinus). These Pied Crested Cuckoos are usually seem around the twin cities from late May to early October; so this early sighting of the bird was quite surprising to us. The remaining time of the evening was completely devoted by us for that bird.

There were two birds, one was brightly coloured, had a prominent crest and was very active while the other was duller with the lustre in the black missing. The crest was not conspicuous and it had brown patches on the lower back. Added to this, it was not very active & usually sat in one place. But both the birds hopped around the thorny bushes growing there, intently searching for something, probably some grub to gulp down. Giving them company were some Indian Robins (Saxicoloides fulicata), Common Babblers (Turdoides caudatus) and some warblers on the ground. The Cuckoos were silent for most of the time, the one im the duller plumage even more so and the other uttered its beautiful call once while being chased by a crow.

We went to the "Fox" on 5th April specially to see them but only the brighter of the two was seen parading over the same area last seen. Visiting again on 19th April, we found no trace of these birds around. They probably had said good-bye to the place.

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IX. Nesting Of The Palm Swift (Cypsiurus parvus)

By: P. Balu, H.No. 26, Opp: Bus Tand, Mehdipatnam, Hyderabad-28.

A nest of the Palm Swift (Cypsiurus parvus) was seem on the underside of a palm leaf in the Income-Tax colony, Mehdipatnam on the 27th of January 1985. The nest was about 12 metres above the ground. When found, one chick was seem hanging onto the nest. The adult birds were feeding the young ones every 30 to 40 seconds. When seen

On the 28th January '85, a third bird was seen feeding the young one at the nest along with two other adults. I could not go daily to watch the nest but I saw this happen again on 31st January '85. When I mentioned this observation at the meeting of BSAP and asked for an explanation for the presence of the third bird, members said that the third bird could be (1) a parent bird that had lost it's brood or (2) a juvenile in the learning process.

Both the above explanations could not be confirmed as the young was at the fledgeling stage. I was fortunate enough to be present there when the fledgeling left the nest.on the morning of 5th Febreary 85. It let go its hold on the nest and fell down a little distance and then with steady wing beats flew up and joined the other Palm Swifts that were flying around.

Another nest of a palm swift was seen in the International Crop Research for Semi-Arid Tropics campus at Patancheru; near the Administrative block. The site of the nest was again on the underside of a palm leaf at an approximate height of 17 metres from the ground. The bulging look of the nest suggested that there were probably eggs in the nest. Could not be confirmed.

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X. A Note On The Nestbuilding Of The Purplerumped Sunbird (Nectarinia zeylonica)

By: P. Balu, H.No: 26, Opp: Bus Depot, Mehdipatnam, Hyderabad - 28.

It is interesting to see the Purplerumped Sunbird (Nectarinia zeylonica) procures material for its nest. I watched on pulling away cobwebs from the corners of walls on the outer side of my house and also from the ventilators. The bird kept stationary in the air and pulled away strand after strand of the cobweb and after 3-5 such pulls, it flies off to add the fresh material to it's nest.

Another very interesting way the Purplerumped Sunbird gets material for its nest is by (a sort of) peeling away thin strips of bark from trees. The only tree I have seen being used for this purpose is the Guava (Psidium guajava). As I sat watching the birds flying around, I saw a Purplerumped Sunbird come and sit on a thin branch of the Guava tree. It then bent down and started rubbing the branch with its beak, or so I thought. But on closer observation through my binoculars, I found that the bird had opened it's beak slightly and was using it as a sort of a scythe to cut into the soft and thin bark of the Guava tree. Once the beak cut the bark to a length of about 3 inches, the bird just gave a tug and a very thin strip of the bark would come off in its beak. Then the strip was pushed back up the beak (and held crosswise there and the process repeated again till the bird had a beakful of these strands of the bark and then it flew off to the nest it was building. I saw this happen quite a few times being performed by the Purplerumped Sunbird but I have not seen the same thing being done by the Purple Sunbird.

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A NEW SUNBIRD: A new species of sunbird, discovered in 1981 in M Mwanthana Forest Reserve on the Uzungwa Mountains in eastern Tanzania, has now been described and named as Nectarinia rufipennis, Rufouswinged Sunbird.

XI. A Note On The Display Behaviour Of The Purple Sunbird (Nectarinia asiatica)

By: P. Balu, H. No. 26, Opp: Bus Depot, Mehdipatnam, Hyderabad - 28.

The behaviour of this bird is very interesting, especially that of the male when it is wooing the female. The bird first sits on a favourite perch which is always the topmost branch if the tree is small and if it is a large tree, then the perch is towards the sides. It is most interesting to note that irrespective of the height of the tree, I observed that the perches selected by the male are almost at the same height. I saw the bird using four trees as perches during it's display to the female.

The male first sits on the perch, throws up its head and starts calling. Then it brings it's wings down showing the white tuft of feathers with a bright tinge of orange. It then pushes it's wings up up over the tuft of feathers. Then the wing is pushed forward & then allowed to droop and are constantly vibrated likt that of a young bird that keeps it's wings moving in a constant motion. I find that the motions the Purple Sunbird goes through with it's wings, brings the tuft of feathers into full prominence and is well known how striking the bird appears when it displays.

The pattern of selecting perches and their final configuration seems to me based on the distance between the two or more perches. I found during my observations that the distance from one perch to the other was no more than a maximum of 10 metres. The perches from a rough triangle if a line were to be drawn through all the perches which the bird used during it's display.

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XII. House Sparrow (Passer domesticus) Lining The Inside Of It's Nest With Fresh Neem (Azadirachta indica) Leaves

By: P. Balu, H. No. 26, Opp: Bus Depot, Mehdipatnam, Hyderabad - 28

On 10th March 1985, I saw a House Sparrow (Passer domesticus) male plucking fresh green leaves of the Neem tree behind my house. I followed the bird and saw that the leaves were being used as inner lining of the cup of the nest. To date (10th March 85) this is continuing but no eggs have been laid. The point that is interesting to note is that the male Sparrow is the only one that is bringing in the fresh leaves from the tree while the female brings in either straw or a piece of thread to add to the nest. I shall continue to monitor the Sparrows and might be in a position to find an answer to the usage of the neem leaves by the male sparrow.

A BIRD CLUB:- Oriental Bird Club has recently come into being with the objective of encouraging interest in the birds of the geographical area from Pakistan to China and south to Indonesia to liase with regional societies and publish data on Oriental birds. For information write to: ORIENTAL BIRD CLUB, THE LODGE, SANDYS, BEDS. SG19 2DL. (U.K.)

HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1984 TO DECEM - BER 1985 (Presented on 21st July, 1986):

" Two and a half years have elapsed since the last time a report was given to the Society members and the Accounts presented. Thisd long gap between the last Annual General Meeting and the present one is truly regretted. There is not much im giving excuses or apportioning responsibilities. The main reason for this, according to me, seems to be the fact that none of us are full time ornithologist or naturalists , who could devote all their time to the functioning of the Society and it's activities. As such, we have to find time from andalready busy schedule of life to devote our time and energies for an activity we all enjoy and give off our best for the objectives of the Society.

" Your Society completed 5 years of its existence in 1985. For an organisation maintained largely out of the meagre revenues from its membership subscriptioms and one single grant from the Forest Dept. of Andhra Pradesh, it is indeed an achievement that it is still active and alive, It must be particularly realised that the endeavours that have brough the Society to its present level are those of it's members in an honorary capacity. Ofcourse the Society sincerely acknowledges the efforts and assistance of the Wildlife Wing of the Forest Dept. of A.P. which contributed so much to make the Society what it is today. It is also necessary and important at this juncture to recollect the sincere efforts of a small but dedicated group of persons who had started this Society in 1980 and worked hard and tirelessly to keep it going in the earlier and more difficult years.

" Although the membership has steadily increased in the 2½ covered by this report (the register shows 182 members om the rolls), there have been some drop-outs who have either left Hyderabad or gone abroad. The disturbing factor is that many of the old members have not renewed their memberships in subsequent years. Inspite of the non-response by some earlier members, the encouragement to the Society has been provided by several new members joining every year. The membership position for the last three years has been as follows:

January 1984 ;; ;; 86 paid members on the rolls.

January 1985 :: :: 77 paid members on the rolls.

January 1986 :: :: 76 paid members on the rolls.

So the position of membership has remained more or less stable. There is considerable room for enlarging the membership and we seek the assistance of our members in this endeavour. Emphasis of the appeal is on those members who for one reason or the other have not renewed their membership. Your continued support is not only solicited but very essential.

"Activities:- Regular field trips were conducted and indoo meetings arranged for the members. The field trips in the past 4-5 years have resulted in a fairly comprehensive list of birds, found in and around Hyderabad City, being compiled. Films and slide shows and talks were held at the indoor meetings, sometimes by our own members and at times by guest speakers. These activities have no doubt improved the knowledge of the members and whetted their appetite for more, but things have not gone beyond this stage.

"Another activity that was started by your Society in 1984 was the 'Habitat Survey Project'. Nine different types of habitats were identified indand around the city and volunteers were assigned to each one of these areas. Their work was to monitor their respective habitats from an environmental point of view and submit their reports to the Project Co-ordinator periodically and also to report any significamt points to the Society at its meetings. Initially there was much enthusiasm shown by the members in this Project and reports kept coming in but unfortumately it seems to have fizzled out now. Prolimimary reports were submitted to the Project Co-ordimator and since then mothing much ahs beem happening im this project work.

" The Society in 1985 promoted another Society - The Society For Nature Conservation (SONACO). This was mainly to broadem the base of the work to be done for environmental conservation and protection of wildlife. The objects of SONACO provide a scope for participation by a wider cross-section of the people. This society has begun functioning already and has gotha good and interested group of people working for it.

"Publication/Bulletim:- The publication of the bulletin MAYURA has been erratic. I will not go into the reason for such a situatiom now. I have been repeatedly informing the members the main reason for this delay - no articles, notes etc! The credibility of a Society like ours depends mostly on the timely publication of its bulletim. It must not only be available to members regularly and on time but it must be seen in the libraries and reading rooms of similar societies and elsewhere and also must reach the various other organisations and eminent persons in the field. Unfortunately with our bulletin this has not been happening for the past 2 years or so. The bulletins brought out in 1985 related to 1984 and now we have a back-log for 1½ years (6 issues). MAYURA is your bulletim and if the members are keen to get it regularly, then they must make a serious and sincere effort to send in their articles and notes, which alone will guarantee the promptness im its publication.

"Our sincere and grateful thanks are due to the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests for his encouragement and assistance given to us by providing us a most convenient place to conduct our meetings im the Forest Department premises and also im regularly arranging the screening of films and slides for the members.

"Our thanks are also due to Mr. Pushp Kumar, Additional Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife & A/cs) for his continuous guidance, assistance and encouragement all these years, which has contributed so much in making the Society what it is today.

"I am sure you will join me in thanking the officers and staff of the Wildlife Wing of the Forest Dept. for their help and assistance so readily & unhesitatingly given, sometimes at short notice and whenever requested in arrenging field trips, talks, films etc. This help has been largely responsible im making our programmes so convenient to arrange.

"Before ending, I would like to extend my personal thanks to our President, Vice-Presidents, Members of the Executive Committee and all other members of the Society (each single one of you) for their guidance, help and support so readily and sincerely given and without which my work would have been so much more difficult, Thank you."

--- Siraj A. Taher

RECEIPTS& PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 - 12 - 1984

RECEIPTS			PAYMENTS		
To Cash Balance	Rs.	543=39	By Postage	Rs.	115=00
" Subscriptions:			" Printing & Stationery:	Rs.	
@Rs.25/- (51) -	Rs.	1,275=00			
@Rs.15/- (24) -	Rs.	360=00	Field List cards including block	Rs.	500=00
@Rs.300/-(2) -	Rs.	600=00			
Admission (2) -	Rs.	20=00	Duplicating material & charges	Rs.	375=00
" Products Sale:					
Field Lists(370)	Rs.	185=00	" Transport to ICRISAT & back for 1983	Rs.	178=04
Badges (20)	Rs.	60=00			
W.W.F. Products 10% commission	Rs.	154=40	" Miscellaneous charges	Rs.	59=60
			" Cost of badges	Rs.	564=00
			" Cash on hand with Hon. Secy.	Rs.	1,406=35
	Rs.	3,197=99		Rs.	3,197=99

21-7-1986
HYDERABAD - 34.

For Birdwatcher's Society of A.P.

Hon. Secretary

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING

31 - 12 - 1985

RECEIPTS			PAYMENTS		
To Cash Balance		Rs. 1,406=35	By Paper & Printing Mayura cover	-Rs.	1,125=00
" Subscriptions:					
@ Rs.25/- (48)	- Rs.	1,200=00	By Duplicating paper	-Rs.	360=00
@ Rs.15/- (16)	- Rs.	240=00	" Duplicating charges	-Rs.	275=00
@ Rs.10/- (8)	- Rs.	80=00	" Postage charges	-Rs.	105=00
" Bank:					
D.D. - (L.M.)	- Rs.	275=00	" Miscellaneous charges	-Rs.	66=50
Cheques Deposited (7+5s)	Rs.	240=00	" Cheques returned	-Rs.	70=00
" Sale of Products:					
Field Lists	- Rs.	20=00	" Cash in bank	-Rs.	1,103=20
Badges	- Rs.	6=00	" Cash in hand with the Hon. Secretary	-Rs.	667=05
W.W.F. Products (10% commission	Rs.	244=40			
	Rs.	3,711=75		Rs.	3,711=75

21-7-1986
HYDERABAD - 34.

For Birdwatcher's Society of A.P.

Hon. Secretary

S O C I E T Y ' S N E W S:

(From the Secretary's Desk)

The programme for 1985 for the members of the Society included 18 field trips and 17 indoor meetings. The field trips were visits to the following places:

January - Shamirpet & Inkriyal; February - Manjira & Vamsthalipuram; March - Fox Sagar & Indira Park; April - Himayathsagar & Chilkur; May - Nehru Zoological Park; June - Kothapet & Vanasthalipuram; July - Qutub Shahi Tombs; August - Chilkur; September - Rajendarnagr & Zoo; October - Shamirpet & Fox Sagar; November - Inkriyal & Anamthgiri; December - Narsapur & Rowriyal.

There were 17 indoor meetings held during the year at which the following members & guest spekers spoke:

	SPEAKERS		TOPIC
1.	P. Kamaiah, Member of BSAP	----	Birding at Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary (Gujerat)
2.	Dr. J.M. Peacock, Member of BSAP	----	A visit to the Wildfowl Trust, -Slimbridge (U.K.)
3.	B.C. Choudhury, Member of BSAP	-----	Venezuelan habitats & Fauna. (with slide show)
4.	O.C. Edwards, Eminent nature photographer	-----	Observations of the behaviour of birds & animal - 50 years of experience in nature photography.
5.	Mrs. Usha Lachungpa Field Biologist, Bombay Natural History Society	-----	Preliminary surveys of Floricam habitats in India --- Behaviour & ecology of the floricams.
6.	Dr. Asad R. Rahmani, Project Scientist Endangered Species Project, Bombay Natural History Society	-----	Great Indian Bustard comservation movement in India with special reference to A.P.
7.	D.L.N. Rau	-----	Experiences in bird photography (with slides)

Various films and slides shows were also screened at the indoor meetings; some of the more interesting ones being:

Monkeys of India; Venezuelan Habitats & Fauna; Lesser Floricans--Habitats & behaviours; The Gangetic Gharial; Wonders around you; Lord of the Jungle; and White Wilderness.

At the indoor meetings in October, a Quiz programme was conducted

for school children. Considering the short notice and school holidays, the response to the Society's invitation was fairly good. Four teams participated. The winners were awarded a prize and the other participants were given momentoes. One prize was donated by Book Syndicate, Hyderabad.

The report of the Lesser Florican (Sypheotides indica) found at Indresham village near Patancheru (Medak Dt.) in November 1984,(MAYURA, Vol.5, p.77) evoked an immediate response from Dr. Salim Ali and a team from the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) visited Hyderabad for verification and other details. Subsequently in February'85 three members of the team from BNHS, comprising of Dr. Asad Rahmani, Galden Bhutia and Mrs. Usha Galdem again visited Hyderabad and went to Indresham village (alongwith three of our members) for an 'on the spot' study of the habitat etc., and for further enquiries. The habitat was found ideally suited for the floricans but no birds were sighted. One labourer working at a farm nearby reported having sighted on two different occasions in December 1984 and January '85, three birds which fairly closely fitted the description of Lesser Floricans. Nothing further could be confirmed.

On the basis of the specimen of the Lesser Florican found at Indresham (skin with the Forest Dept.), the A.P. Forest Dept. took some steps to locate the bird by printing and distributing well designed posters in English and Telugu. Also in December '84, officials of the Forest Dept., alongwith 3 members of BSAP visited the area for a brief survey of the habitat. Inspite of the best efforts of this group, no birds were sighted on that occasion.

The Indian Express (Vijayawada Edn.) of 23/11/84 and Andhra Prabha (Telugu) of 25/11/84 carried a news item of a Flamingo (Phoenicopterus roseus) having been caught by a fisherman in Addanki Taluq of Prakasham District. The bird had a ring on it's leg with the following markings:

INFORM ENVIRONMENT TEHRAN --- LL - 23165

(Besides some inscriptions in Persian)

The newspaper report further said that the Village Assistant, Sundar Rami Reddy informed the Tahsildar about the find and that the b bird was with Mr. Sivashankar Rao, a school teacher and an animal lover who had offered to look after the bird. The other details of the capture are:
-- bird caught in Veerula cheruvu(Telugu -lake) of Ballikurva village, Addanki taluq, Prakasham Dt. (Addanki - 79°50'N - 15°55' E). Efforts to feed it with fish (hic!) were proving unsuccesful. The District Collector and the A.P. Forest Dept. officials have been informed of the find.-----

(Note): The last known information from the Forest Department was that they were making efforts to secure the bird and the ring from the person/s having it. The plan was to either release the bird into the wild if it was in a good condition or keep it at the Vizag Zoo if injured or sick.

Wildlife Week was celebrated during the 1st week of October and as usual our Society members were actively associated both in the organisation and participation in the various competitions. Some of our members secured prizes in the photographic exhibition held durin the week. Congratulations to them.

SOLITARY CROW:

By: Norman Mac Craig

Why Solitary crow? He in his feathers
Is a whole world of crow - of a dry-stick nest,
Of windy distances where to be crow is best,
Of tough-guy clowning and of black things done.
To a sprawled lamb whose blood beads in the sun.

Sardonic anarchist. Where he goes he carries,
Since there is no centre, what a centre is,
And that is crow, the ragged self that's his.
Smudged on a cloud, he jeers at the world then halts
To jeer at himself and turn two somersaults.

He ambles through the air, flops down and see saws
On a blunt fence post, hiccups and says Caw.
The sun glints greasy on his working craw
And adds a silver spot to that round eye
Whose black light bends and cocks the world awry.

GLEANINGS FROM THE PRESS:

More Black-necked Cranes in Ladakh: The number of Blacknecked Cranes Grus nigricollis inhabiting the cold desert region of Ladakh has risen to 16 from 13 last year, according to the latest scientific survey. The Blacknecked Crane was first spotted in Ladakh in 1976 by Dr. Salim Ali. Since then, extensive observations of the species had been undertaken by the Indian Army and the State Wildlife Dept. These cranes are spring, summer and autumn residents of the Changthang region of the eastern Ladakh area. (WWF Newsletter, Vol:6 No.1)

Unintended picnic for Golden Eagles: A programme to restore endangered Peregrine Falcon Falco peregrinus to Sequoia National Park in California suffered a setback in 1983 when 2 of the 3 released fledgelings were eaten by Golden Eagles Aquila chrysaetos. Biologists recaptured the third before the eagles could catch it. (ORYX Vol.18,No.1)

Crane stops dam: An application to build a dam for irrigation purposes on a tributary of the South Platte River in Nebraska, USA, has been turned down because it would jeapordise the continued existence of the Whooping Crane Grus americana by degrading the habitat used in spring and autumn mugration by about 700 of the species.

(ORYX Vol:18, No.2)

Pesticide kills 100 peacocks: About 100 peacocks - the national bird, died due to suspected pesticide poisoning in Madhya Pradesh recently. The birds met with a tragic end after feeding on a farm sprinkled with a heavy dose of pesticide. The police have arrested 3 farmers under the Wildlife Protection Act because they suspect it to be a case of deliberate poisoning. The farmers, it is alleged had sprinkled the farm with more than a liberal dose of an extremely toxic pesticide to 'teach a lesson' to the horde of peacocks who had been invading and destroying their standing crops in the vegetable farm. Forest officials are yet to investigate the tragedy. (WWF Newsletter, Vol:6 No.2)

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS:

Contributors of scientific articles/miscellaneous notes are requested to assist the editors by observing the following instructions:

1. Papers which have at the same time been offered for publication to other journals or periodicals, or have already been published elsewhere, should not be submitted.
2. Papers/articles pertaining to ornithology in Andhra Pradesh State or to bird species found in Andhra Pradesh State only, will be accepted.
3. The MS should be preferably typed (double spacing) on one side of a sheet only, and the sheets properly numbered.
4. All common names of birds, mammals etc., should be followed by the scientific name the first time they are mentioned in the text. The scientific names should be underlined.
5. Trinomials refering to subspecies should only be used where identification has been authentically established by comparisons of specimens actually collected.
6. Photographs for reproduction must be clear and show good contrast. Prints must be Postcard sized and on glossy glazed paper.
7. Text figures, line drawings and maps should be in Indian ink.
8. Reference to literature should be placed at the end of the paper, alphabetically arranged under the author's name, with the abridged titles of journals or periodicals underlined (italics) and titles of books not underlined (roman type), thus:

   Choudhury, B.C. (1984): Habitat Survey Project (HSP) of BSAP - A Preliminary Report. Mayura 5(4): 80-89

   Ali, S. (1977): The Book of Indian Birds. Bombay.

9. Reference to lierature in the text should be made by quoting the author's name and year of publication, thus: (Choudhury 1984).
10. The editors reserve the right, other things being equal, to publish a member's contribution earlier than a non-member's.

Editors

MAYURA

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BIRDWATCHERS' SOCIETY OF ANDHRA PRADESH

The Birdwatchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh was founded in 1980 with the object of spreading the message of bird conservation. Services to members include fortnightly field-trips, slide and film shows, discussions and talks; MAYURA, the quarterly newsletter, ID cards, field tick-lists and badges. Membership of the Society is open to persons of either sex & of any nationality, scientific societies, institutions, clubs & companies. Corporate Membership is available for persons in their official capacity. For membership and contributing articles to MAYURA, and advertisements, contact the Hon. Secretary, Birdwatchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh, 6-3-249/3, Road No. 1, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad-500 034.

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Membership Fee :

Ordinary	.....	Rs. 25/- p. a.
Life	.....	Rs. 300/-
Students	... ...	Rs. 15/- p.a.
Corporate	.....	Rs. 100/- p.a.

For Advertisement Tarrif :

Contact Hony. Secretary

OFFICE BEARERS

Pushp Kumar	President
S. Ashok Kumar Maj. A.A. Aziz	} Vice Presidents
Siraj A. Taher	Hon. Secretary
T. Deendayal	Hon. Treasurer

AIMS AND OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY

a) To inculcate in the people, especially the youth, a spirit of adventure, a love & appreciation of the beauties of nature, especially the avifauna.

b) To impress upon the people the role of avifauna in life on earth & the urgent need for their protection and conservation.

c) To inculcate in the people a sense of responsibility towards maintaining the environment in a good state & the protection of the other inhabitants of this earth & particularly the avifauna.

d) To work for the protection & conservation of bird sanctuaries, parks & habitats generally all over India & particularly in Andhra Pradesh.

e) To promote amongst the people, the knowledge of ornithology in all its branches including particularly the study of bird life of the Oriental Regions, particularly India & the adjoining zeogeographical regions; both alive & otherwise.

f) To carry out research in all branches of ornithology and to assist with information & advice as well as financially where possible, other institutions & individuals in similar pursuits.

g) To provide, equip, maintain & replenish a museum & other repositories for birds, both living or dead, which are suitable & necessary for the study of birds.

h) To do all or any of the above mentioned acts solely or with another or others, for joint management or collaboration or affiliation or any other arrangements with societies or persons having similar or allied objects which may further or benefit the objects of this society.

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Front Cover :

INDIAN COURSER (*Cursorius coromadnelicus*). A sandy brown cursorial bird lacking the double breast bands of the extremely rare Jerdon's courser. Resident and patchily distributed in appropriate habitats in Andhra Pradesh. Unlike the Jerdon's Courser which was reported only from the Pennar and Godavary valleys of A. P.

Photographs : Courtesy O. C. Edwards.

Back Cover

INDIAN KOEL (*Eudynamys scolopacea*). Female (shown in the photo) is dark brown and white barred. The Male is glistening metallic black, with yellowish green bill. Resident & local migratory, it is a very common bird in Andhra Pradesh. Brood parasitic on other birds.